

WILFULL
IMPENITENCY
THE GROSSEST
SELF-MURDER.

All they who are guilty of it, apprehended, tried, and condemned

Elizabeth in these SERMONS. *William*

Preached at *Rochford* in *Essex* not long before his death, by that able, faithful, and laborious Minister of Jesus Christ, Mr. *William Fenner*, B. D. and made publique by one of his unworthy fellow-labourers.

Prov. 1. 24, 25, 26. Because I have called, and ye have refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded: But ye have set at naught all my counsell, and would none of my reproof, I will also laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh.

John 5. 40, 43. And ye will not come to me that ye might have life. I am come in my Fathers Name, and ye receive me not; if another shall come in his own Name, him you will receive.

Velle meum Domine misericordia tale est de redeundo ad te, quale est velle tuum de mea ad te reversione. Guil. Paris. de Rhetor. Div. c. 14.

Quid agit liberum? Breviter respondeo, salvatur.

Bern. de Lib. Arb. & Gr.

Non velle in causâ est, non posse prætenditur. Sen.

The second Edition.

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RED CROSS STREET
LONDON.



To the Right Honourable
Robert Rich, Baron of Leez in
in *Essex*, and Earle of *Warwick* :
Abundance of Spirituall bles-
sings in *Iesus Christ*.

P*aul* being upon a *propheticall wing*,
(for the Lord had poured upon
him, not only an *Apostolicall*, but a *This know*
Propbeticall spirit) doth foretell in *2 Tim.* also (saith
3. 1. *That in the last daies perilous times* he) there's
shoul'd come; those who are full of *carnall* the infal-
self-love and unthankfulnessse, will much lible cer-
encrease the danger of this last age of the tainty of
World; (the Lord root up all such weeds it.
out of our hearts.)

God hath, I hope, given *your Honour*
such a measure of *love to the publike*, and
so *active a spirit to do good to others*, as will
help to lessen the danger of these evill
times. And I would be so thankfull for
favours received, that I might not be
ranked among this *dishonourable Catalogue*
which here *Paul* sums up, of *such as make*
bad times worse.

It is your Honours *happinesse and ad-*
vantage, (as it was once said of the Duke

The Epistle

Prov. 30.
10, 11, 12,

of *Guise* in *France*, that he did put obligations upon all) that you can engage very many; and amongst the rest, I must ever acknowledge my self one, who in one of the greatest turnings of my life, by the good hand of God upon me in your free consent and Noble bounty have had so much comfort, in the neereſt and deereſt relation, that I never envied any other, but finde matter of everlasting praises to God for his goodnesse to my selfe therein. And being under so great obligations, when I can produce nothing of my own worthy your acceptance, I take leave to act the part of a *Midwife* to this happy Birth which may call your Honour Father, as wil appeare by the following Letter, that it was ultimately intended for your spirituall advantage; and it were now a kind of sacriledge to keepe that holy issue from you, that is so much your own. It joyes the souls of me and many more of your praying servants, that they have so much occasion to praise their God on your behalfe, for so many able and faithfull Ministers of the Gospel, of the first, second, and third magnitude, that your prudent, fatherly care hath fixed, where you as Patron have been trusted.

Oh the many Chariots and Horsmen of *Israel*, that your Noble Father and you have

Dedicatory.

have brought triumphantly into *Essex*,
(herein you did happily *Patrizare*) the
Lord continue the like care to *build and*
repaire his House in *these who survive you*
from generation to generation, that so your
House may still be honourably supported.

Ecclesiasticall Story speaks of one *Hen-*
ricus Anceps, when he did fight against the
Hungarians, made this vow to God, *That*
if the Lord would give him victory against
his enemy, he would purge his Country from
Simony, which at that time mightily a-
bounded therein. We want men of such
an *heroicall zealous disposition* in England.

Oh that all *Patrons* were more *mindfull*
of *their high trust*; then they would not
so often betray the souls of people by ^{2 Kings}
^{13. 14.} &c.
putting off a friend &c. with a Living to
some *unworthy Chaplain*. Doubtlesse there
is many a *damned creature roaring in Hell*,
cursing *covetous Patrons* as well as unfaith-
full *Pastors*; For whose *Bloud* (in part at
least) they must be accountable to the
Father of spirits, and *Judge of quick and*
dead. A most heavy reckoning, when the
sins of so many *Congregations*, to which
Patrons are necessary by sending ignorant
and scandalous *Ministers* amongst them,
are made theirs; whereas the least of
their *own sins* unrepented of, wil *sink them*
eternally. God

The Epistle

God who is faithfull, will nor forget your labour and cost of love to the truly reverend man of God, Mr. *Hooker*, (who is now singing Hallelujahs in Heavenly Mansions) when he was *persecuted* by the **Archi-flamen* of *Canterbury*. He will pay abundantly for the protecting and nursing his Children, *Heb. 6. 10.*

* There are many of great reading who will

undertake to make it appeare, that as Heathenish feasts *Bacchanalia* & *Saturnalia*, &c. were turned into Christmas, and such other feasts, hoping thereby to win heathens to Christ: so were *Archi-flamens*, and *Flamins* changed into *Arch-prelates* and *prelates*, out of a good intention.

I know not how better to expresse my *deep sence* of your most *reall favour* (the comfort whereof I daily enjoy) then by taking the humble boldnesse to beseech your Honour to adde one thing more, which indeed is the *unum necessarium*, whereby you will gain that *better part*, which shall not be taken from you; Namely, that you would *study* and *pray* that you may walk in the light and heat of that glorious Gospel constellation (for Ministers are Stars, and the **Angels of the Churches*) which you have endeavoured to fix in your Orbe. Your Honour hath been so often at Sea, and there beholding the won-

Luke 10.
42.
Rev. 1. 20.

* So acknowledged by the Translators in the contents

of the second Chapter of the Revelation. They, it seems, did not think these Angels to be Prelates. *Qui nescit orare discat navigare.* Jonah 1. 5.

Saers

Decatory.

ders of God in the deep, have been taught to wrestle with him for mercy. It is an old saying, he that would learn to pray, let him go to Sea. Besiege Heaven with your unwearied importunities, that the Ark of the Gospel, which you have provided for thousands, may be your own everlasting Sanctuary. And that your feasting upon their dainties, may be fat and flourishing in your last daies; standing stedfast in these shaking times, and immoveable, keeping Faith and a good conscience, (which too many having put away concerning Faith, have made shipwrack) more and more abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as you know your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

This through the grace of Christ,
shall be the earnest prayer of
him who is,

My Lord,

Your Honours most obliged servant,

THOMAS HILL.



T O
The Right Worshipfull my much
Honoured friend,
Sir NATHANIEL RICH.

2 King. 13
14.

I Have been often thinking what to send to you ; at last this Theme which I have lately treated of in the Pulpit came into my mind ; its of infinite use and necessity, and a truth little examined, considered, or layed to heart, yet marvellous necessary for humiliation to all the children of God, and of great weight for the making the world guilty before God. I had thought to have sent it to my Lord of Warwick for his subciseive houres ; and if you judge it profitable, after your perusal of it, to commit it unto him for me, you shall doe well. I am sorry to beare of such a Worthies sicknesse or weaknesse. Now Elisha the man of God was fallen sick; the very words are able to strike through. The Lord lend you health and strength, and peace, and comforts, and joy ; it is not onely matter of courtesie to pray for such as you are, but of debt, and our very necessities and duties call for it, and mine more especially. The Lord be merciful to me, and to many in raising you up, and make you plenus dierum, and serus in cœlum redire ; that's all the hurt that I wish you ; And so I commend you to the word of his power that is able to keep you, and rest

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

WILLIAM FENNER.



To the Christian Reader, who desireth to hold fast the form of sound words in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus; and to advance Free-grace above Free-will.

Most admirably wise and fatherly hath been the Lords care of his Churches in all ages; & when there were false Prophets under the old Testament; the Lord had his Jeremiah's to confute them, whom he made a defenced City, an Iron pillar, and Brazen wall against all opposition. When the devil stirred up Hymeneus Philetus, and others, to undermine the truths of the Gospel, in the times of the New Testament; the Lord raised and accomplished his Pauls to confound them. You shall finde when the Churches of Christ are in a wildernesse condition, and the Serpent cast out of his mouth waters as a floud after the woman; that is, multitudes of unsound and Heretical opinions, the earth helped the woman, and opened her mouth, and swallowed the floud which the Dragon cast out of his mouth: that is, Jesus Christ had those here that did encounter and overthrow all false Doctrine, with which the devil by his agents endeavoured to poyson and destroy the Churches

Jer. i. 18.

1 Tim. i.

20.
Rev. 12. 15,
16.

See learned Mr. Mede in his excellent Book on the place.

To the christian Reader.

1. About
A.D. 330.
under
Constantine
the great,
vixn.

Churches. Thus it was in the four generall Councils, namely, that of Nice, when Arrius a Presbyter of Alexandria denying that the Son of God was consubstantial with the Father, and asserting that there was a time when he was not, was confuted, and truth obtained a men to oppose God stirring up many learned victory there, him.

2 About
A.D. 384
under The-
odosius.

And in the second, that of Constantino-ple, when there was a Macedonius, who cal- led the Holy Ghost a creature, many were able by the power of truth to confound him.

3. About
A.D. 490.
under The-
odosius the
second,
not 300-
700, but
Χπι-
500.
About A.
D. 456.
under
Martianus
Ca'cedon.

And the third, when a Nestorius, who de- nied that the Virgin Mary could be called the mother of God, providence ordered it so that then a Council of learned Bishops and Elders at Ephesus should blast that opinion. And when an Euriches (who in a different way from Nestorius, who denied the perso- nal Union of two Natures in Christ) would have the immensity of the Divine nature in Christ, and that there was only the Divine na- ture in him, another Councell at Calcedon overthrew him.

Cent. 3.

Thus God had variety of Champions to contest with the most subtile and prevailing adver- saries, from hand to hand; particularly, when there was Mares & Manichæi, who rejected the old Testament, and affirmed that man fell not by voluntary defection, but of necessity, because

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because mans body was made of the Prince of darknesse (wherewith Austin was leavened before his conversion) The Lord had Chrylostom and others to hinder the spreading and prevailing of it.

When there was an Arrius, who denied the Divinity of Christ, there should be an Athanasius raised to overthrow him. Cent. 3.

When a Macedonius to oppose the Holy Ghost, then a Basil to break him. Cent. 5.
Dempsterus
ex Walsfildā

When a Pelagius to advance Free-will into the Throne of Free-grace, then God would raise up an Austin, (that great light of the Church in his time) to depose that, and to restore this to its crown and dignity. refert eodem die
quo ille in Anglia natus, tenebras errorum toti mundo effudit sumū Ecclesie lumen Augustinum in Africa exiitisse. About A.D. 418.

This Pelagius was born in Britaine the same day that Austine in Affrick, he was the first presumptuous advancer of the pride of Free-will. He did not think the grace of God to be necessary for the helping of Free-will, for good things in every act. This was condemned in the councill of Carthage, wherein indeed to save himself he did equivocate in the word grace, acknowledging a naturall, an exciting, and after conversion an assisting grace. This Doctrine was likewise condemned in the Synod of Palestina, 1200 years agoe, and therein Arminianism kild before it was born, by the strength of that place, 2 Tim. 1.9. Note. necessary for helping
Damnata antequam nata Arminii opinio.

This

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This Pelagius had his Scholers, Julianus and Cælestinus. Jesus Christ would not then leave Austin without some Disciples to confliet with those (as Chrysostome had his Oecumenius, and Theophylact his Pedisequi, his followers) so was there a Prosper, and Hilary Arelatensis, to encounter the old Massilians, and Semipelagians in France.

And when there was a Faustus Regiensis (a most subtil adversary) a Bishop who did closely defend Pelagianism in two Books of Free-will; The Church should have a Fulgentius, and Petrus Diaconus, and others to oppose him. Tea sentence was then given against Pelagius and Semi-pelagians, in the Council of Orenge. In the general, that their opinions touching free-will and free-grace, were not agreeable to the Catholick faith.

Vide learned Arch-Bi. Ushers most excellent discourse of free in his answer to the Jesuits challenge.

About A. p. 529.

Further, about the year 850, one Johannes Scotus (not he which wrote upon the Sentences with so much opposition against Thomas Aquinas, but another) wrote a Book against Predestination, which the Church of Leyden confuted with a godly and learned book.

When Gotteschalcus, about the year 849. spake of Predestination perilously, to wit,
That

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That those who were predestinated to life by the decree of Gods predestination were forced to do well : and those who were predestinated to condemnation, were forced by the decree of God to do evil, *he was resisted by Hincmarus and other learned men.*

This infectious error Pelagianism spread in England, where it was apt to take the deeper rooting, because Pelagius himself by birth was a Brittain: But the Lord raised learned Bradwardine Arch-bishop of Canterbury and some others to appear in the cause of God and of free-grace, and to fortifie the Churches against all Pelagians, whom Augustin calls Inimicos gratiæ dei; and Fulgentius, Vasa iræ dei.

Afterwards the subtilty of the Serpent insinuated himself into the Garden of the Church by the wit and learning of Faustus Socinus (another Infauftus Faustus in Poland;) They who have opportunity to consult Socinus books de Ministerio, and the Catechismus Cracoviensis (a most subtil and dangerous book) shall finde there the seeds of Arminianism, their Helena, there to be conceived (however Molina and other Popish Authors contend, as once the seven Cities did whose Homer was) their Media Scientia. They will grant a Divina Præscientia, but deny

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Leaving the will to it self its own acts, which indeed is no lesse then a to produce its degree of Atheisme, setting up the second cause into the Throne of the first. Herein, and in divers other things the Arminians doe tread in their steps, as will appear to those who examine Peltius his book, the Harmony of the Socinian and Arminians Doctrine. I wish that book were in English; it would make many blush now adayes to see how incogitantly (I hope that is the worst in many) they have run themselves into the Tents of Socinians & Arminians, and know not now how honourably to retreat.

*About the yeere 1570. when Petrus Barro a French man, had infected Cambridge with that disease from France, (you see spiritual as well as bodily evils have come from France) and one Mr. Barret, who acted concurrently with him: but then God giving the Heads of Colledges with the Vicechancellor a prudent zeal to oppose it, they sent up Dr Tindal and Dr. Whitaker, to complaine to Arch-bishop Whitgift, which begot that Usefull Book of Articuli Lambethani.**

* Soone after this journey

Dr. Whitakers blessed soul returned to her eternal rest, having not long before in an admirable conscio ad clerum, (rightly called his *Cygnae Cantio*) discovered and confuted the chief points of Arminianism.

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*The Leaven came then into the Netherlands, and (as learned King James saith) Arminius was the first that infected Leyden with the Pelagian Heresie * He was a strong and cleare parted man; and as it is said of Origen, Ubi bene, nemo melius: ubi male nemo pejus, so there are some excellent discourses in his Workes, and others as desperately opposite to the Covenant of Grace, spattering all the links of the Golden chaine of our salvation, which is the great evil of Arminianisme. From a young student, Junius presaged of him, that he would be a very useful, or most pernicious instrument in the Church of Christ. By this Junius (when the Lord had converted him from Atheisme, by reading the beginning of the first Chapter of the Gospel of John, wherein he saw such majesty, that he thought that the Lord did therein detonare ab alto) the Lord gave a soveraigne antidote to his Church in those parts, against the infection of Arminianisme. As about the same time, by that glorious light, Mr. Perkins, in England, whom the Lord made a Malleus both of Papists and Arminians, and by more cleare and condescending discoveries of Christ, made the deep misteries of speculative, and the heavenly secrets of practical Divinity, to meet in the Pulpit;*

and

** Pelagianism oft called Heresie. Vide Dr. Featly's preface to his Pelag. Red.*

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and all this in a little time ; (for he lived but about 44. yeares , being borne (*ni fallor*) in the first, and dyed in the last of Queen *Elizabeths* reign. Oh how much did he in a little time ?

But still the Diuel will be casting weeds into Christs garden , picking up those that have been rooted out , and throwing them o-ver the wall againe.

Now he made use of Barnevelt in Holland, to bring Religion to serve State purposes, and so carried on the Arminian designe there. These differences about the power of Free-will, and such things as hang upon that (for there is the *primum movens*) now came to be reduced to five Articles, which begate the conference at Hage, betwixt both parties ; which is reported both by Brandius and Ber-tius.

As the
name Pro-
testants
given first
to the
Princes
free cities
of Germa-
ny that
sought
Reforma-
tion in the
Diet at
Spiro, A.
D. 1529.
and from
them pas-
sed to us
and other
countries
where it
was effe-
cted.

About this time came up the name of Re-monstrants , as the name Protestant had formerly. Whereupon Dr. Ames (once Fel-low of Christs Colledge in Cambridge, but in Dr. Charies time then Master of that place, it grew too hot for him, he not comply-ing with the present ceremonies , and ha-ving Preached a Sermon at the University Church against playing at cards which would not then be born) was by the dispo-sing hand of divine Providence carried into those

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those parts, where (as the Austin of that time and place) he did grapple with all the Patrons of Freewill. And as an Appendix to that conference at Hage, (as it is set forth by Brandius) writ that most excellent booke of his Coronis. But still Arminius his disciples acted to their utmost. Bertius, Grevinconius, and others so distracted those Churches, that there was a necessity of calling a Synod, which God gave them as a happy remedy, An.Dom. 1618.

Oh the unwearied activity of adversaries to the cause of Christ (which should make others blush to move so heavily in asserting the Doctrine of Free-grace) before we could understand what the Anti-remonstrants in the Synod at Dort fully intended, we had from the Remonstrants Acta Synodalia, a book indeed that required an Ames to answer it (which he hath done most learnedly) where you have Magnum in Parvo, a great soule in a little body, a great deale of forme in a little matter (as in his Bellarminus enervatus) that being done by the Fraternity with concurrent endeavours and quintessence of the best wits amongst the Remonstrants.

Synod of
Dort, D. A.
1618.

About the yeare 1627. Mr. Montague a man of great learning, and being backed by the then potent D. of Buckingham, opened

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his Arminian (and I had almost said Popish) pack, when the Lord used Bishop Carleton, Doctor Featly, Doctor Preston, and others, as happy Instruments to discover his adulterate wares.

Lately there sprung up a new broode of such as did assert Arminianisme, as Dutch Tompson fellow of Clare-Hall, Mr. Will. Chappel fellow of Christ Coll. (as the many Pupills that were Arminianiz: under his tuition (whether by him or no, he best knows) but men are more confirmed in their suspicion hereof, since they heard of his answerable actions in the University in Irel. but still as in Oxford, when there was any danger of spreading Armin. whether in Acts, Books, or Sermons, they had there Robert Abbot, Twisse, Prideaux, & other works to suppress them? So in Cambridge God gave us lately Davenant & Ward, who did victoriously enter the lists with the most confident adversaries of Freegrace. And that bitter weeds could never take deepe rooting in any of these three kingd, and thrive very fruitfully: There was in Ireland a most learned Arch-Bishop Usher to crush it their, And a mighty man in these Controversies, Doctor Twisse (another Austine) to suppress it in England. As learned & industrious M. Rutherford and others have done their parts

Who
were astr
prime
magistru-
dinis.

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successfully in Scotland. But alas Arminius now appears amongst us, not so much in the Schooles and Pulpits, as in popular meetings.

For as Zanchius complained with much regret of the Sulteran Ubiquitaries, that he found them ubique, every where to vex and molest him, so may we grieve, (O that we could with brokennesse of heart bewaile it) that our Universalists, are almost universally spread amongst us; It is gotten into our Netherlands, much in the fennish & moorish parts of this kingdom, yea amongst many people that love Iesus Christ, & therefore extertaine it, as conceiving it most for his Honour (the more are they to be pittied, and to be instructed with a spirit of meeknesse; shew them by Scripture evidencethis is not Gods way of advancing Christ, and you recover them) it is now in popular hands, we need such worthies as the Author of this following Treatise (blessed be the Father of mercy, the Fountaine of every good and perfect gift, for his and many others fruitfull labours) who may condescend to perley with poor Christians at their Tables, in their shops, to follow them at the plow (as Reverend Mr Greenham was wont to do) endeavouring to rectifie and reduce them.

He knew how to deale wisely with subtile ad-

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versaries, that he might have the more advantage against them, grants them as much as he could with consistency to his own principles, that so he might the more easily confound theirs; onely you will be so candid as to consider that herein he speakes ad populum; And therefore as the ancient Fathers, often useth the liberty of speaking like a Preacher rather then as a Doct^r of the Chaire.

I reckon this a very strong argument to confute the power of Freewil to any spirituall action in a gracious manner, the wofull experience of mine own wretched heart, being naturally so desperately wicked, opposite to any spirituall good. But this will not convince others; only by the way I would know how it comes to passe, if Arminius Doctrin be true, that we have Freewill, to choose that which is truly good, why Arminians are not all very good men? Will not this be an aggravation against them at the dreadful day of judgment?

N. 12.

Therefore the Lord is most admirably gracious in giving us such Masters of the Assemblies to fasten such Scripture truths as may hold us fast and close under the Covenant of Grace.

He was a blessing to the Colledge where he was fellow, of Pembroke Hall in Cambridge

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bridge (which hath been a fruitfull nursery to the Church, and an ornament to the University) and after a burning and shining light in Staffordshire. He delighted much in preaching in an Evangelicall way, from place to place, as pittying many poor pining seduced soules under bliade and superstitious Ministers. The Lord fill their hearts, with compassion to them, who have power in their hands to supply them, that so millions do not perish for want of vision.

Afterwards the noble Earl of Warwick fixed him at Rochford in Essex, where he did speak & do great things to the honor of Free Grace. He lived there more by acting vigorously to his great Lord & Master Jesus Christ, in a few years, then most of us his Brethren do in many.

O that we who are left behinde in these conflicting times, could more punctually and closely follow his example? It is not studying the groundlesse fopperies of Popery, nor the immersing our minds wholly into some dry disputes concerning some externalls and formes about Religion, (as too many do now a dayes being engaged in a party) that will spiritualize us or our hearts so much as Studying and Preaching over the Covenant of Grace; The mysterions and heavenly secrets of the Gospell rightly

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ly opened and wisely applyed, will by Gods blessing breed a Gospell spirit in thee, leave a gracious tincture upon the spirits of Teachers and Hearers; whereas possibly for want of this, there may be a legall tartnesse and severity in the Spirits and Tongues of able and good men.

The gracious and powerfull Lord who only teacheth to profit, annoynt all his Saints with that holy unction that they may be able to discern of things that differ, clearly to distinguish betwixt truth and error. And that he may to this and other happy purposes, blesse abundantly this savourly acute and solid Treatise, shall be the earnest Prayer of him,

Who is thine in and for
the Lord Iesus.

THOMAS HILL.



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- 3 Because he can shew it too when he list. p.42
- 4 Because the rod is able to whip it out of him, p.43
- 5 Because he can do an hundred times more when he is pleased, p.44
- 6 Because he will shew it in Hell, viz. That it was in him to do more then he did, p.49
- 3 Ground A wicked man will not set himselfe to use all the means p.49

The Table.

that he may,	p.52	
A wicked man may use the means that God appointed	Demon,	
as means,	p.52	
Because 'tis the very nature of means to come between	1. Argu.	
ones can and his cannot,	ibid.	
Because God doth not exhort men like a company of	2	
stocks and stones, but as men that are edifiable by his		
words,	p.53	
Because Gods anger is very reasonable,	q.54	3
Because Gods offer of his kingdome to the wicked is	4	
serious,	p.55	
Because Gods reprooves are very equall,	p.56	5
His condemnation must be wilful, that wil not use all the	Conclusi.	
means	p.57	

Proved by three Arguments.

God wil not help that man by a miracle to go, that hath	1. Argu.	
legs to go, and wil not.	ibid.	
God wil not bare a farthing of the price he sets thee at		
	p.59	2
God wil never be brought out of his walk to shew thee		
any mercy, or give thee any grace	p.60	3
Gods Kingdom cannot be attained without a diligent use	Conclusi.	
of the means	p.63	

Reasons of it.

Because heaven is an end, and an end can never be gotten	1. Reas.	
without means	ibid.	2
God hath annexed it to the means	ibid.	3
Every soul must give an account before God how he hath		
used the means	ibid.	4
God wil not set up another door into heaven for any		
man in the world	ibid.	

Further proofs and encouragements to use the means.

Some of the means that God hath appointed, you may do		
them without labour	p.64	1
Some of the means that God hath appointed are easier		
then them	ibid.	2
Some of the means are easier yet	ibid.	
Some of the means of grace, its harder to omit them then		3
to use them	p.65	
Some of the means of grace, be they hard, yet they are but		4
hard, they are not impossible for you to use	p.65	5
	Ob-	

The Table.

Objections.

Obje^t. 1. The first Objection's drawn from the Scriptures which say they cannot,

Answ.

The Scripture Speaks of five cannots, 1. Of a naturall cannot 2. Of a deliberate cannot, 3. Of a judiciall cannot. 4. Of a compounded cannot, 5. of a humbling cannot.

2 Obje^t.

Answ.

Thou wouldst (as thou pretendst) but thou canst not. Perhaps its the will of thy conscience, and not the will of thy heart. 2. May be its a copulative will, Repentance and some lust, godlynes and some lust. 3. May be thou hast a wouling will, this is no will but onely a velleity, 4. May be thou hast a generall Metaphysicall will, but to come to particulars, there thou wilt not. 5. Thou hast no true will, because if thou didst will, thou couldst.

p. 71.

3 Obje^t.

Answ.

Thou desirest to do it, but art not able. Who can tell best what is in thee, God or his owne heart? But the reason of this mistake is, 1. Thou hast purative or thinking desires, thou think'st thou desirest.

2. Thou hast ignorant desires; 3. Thou hast wandering desires, and therefore thou art mistaken,

p. 77

4 Obje^t.

Answ.

Thou resolvest and hast good purposes but oh thou canst not performe them.

These purposes thou speakest of are only willing for the future. 1. Because its only to shuffle off the willing for the present, 2. This will for hereafter is no will, because its goes without Gods, 2. It is no will, because thou shalt misse those suppositions that thou willest upon.

First, thou supposest thou shalt have fewer temptations hereafter, 2. Thou supposest thou shalt be fitter hereafter.

3. Thy will for hereafter is no will but a mockery.

5 Obje^t.

Answ.

Thou labourest to serve God and to be saved.

Is it this labour for grace and heaven, when thou labour-est so idly? wherefore thy impenitency is wilfull, thy damnation's wilfull, and thy ruine wilfull

p. 81

Hence also it followes, 1. That your destruction is from self. 2. Your destruction is just. 3. Your destruction is inexcusable. 4. Your destruction is unavoydable, 5. Your destruction is pittileffe. 6. Your destruction is grievous.

Application.

Us 1. of Instructi- on.

Thou canst never be humble unlesse thou believe this truth; a man is never humbled as long as he excuses him- selfe. Now


For

The Table.

First, thou excusest thy selfe for all Transgressions. besides	1	Excuse.
originall,		ibid.
Now thou excusest thy selfe from originall sinne too;	2	
Lord I would be without sin, but J cannot		p.85
Nay thou excusest thy selfe for every sin: thou takest all	3	
thy sins to be nothing but infirmities,		
Nay thou commendest thy selfe more then God,	p.87	4
Nay thou canst not so much as pray to God for a will:		5
thou art so proud that thou conceivest thou hast that		
already,	p.88	
Nay thou layst all the blame upon God,	p.89	6
First, because you cast the blame upon nature, its my	1. Demon:	
nature, and I cannot,	ibid	
Secondly thou dost cast the blame upon temptations, Jts		2
my hard hap to fall upon temptations,	p.90	
Thirdly, thou layest the blame upon the Times, the times		3
are very bad,	p.91	
Fourthly, thou layest the blame upon this Command-		4
ment. If it were any Commandement but this, I would		
do it,	ibid:	
Fifthly, thou layest the blame upon ill fortune, add		5
bad luck,	p.92	
Nay, sixthly thou findest fault with all Gods proceed-		6
ings,	p.94	
This discovers the deceitfulnesse of thy heart	p.95	Use 2. 1
First, thou wouldst very faine, if God would enable thee:		
but thy heart does but lye unto God.	ibid.	
Secondly, hereby thou dodgest with God, and temptest		
the Lord,	p.96	
Thirdly, hereby thou shufflest off the word, when thou		
hast heard it,	ibid.	
This poynt calls for great humiliation; for		Use 3.
1 Here lyes the especially the pride of the heart, not in		
mens cannots, but their will nots,	ibid.	
2 Here lyes especially the hardning of the heart,	p.98	
3 Here lyes especially the stubbornes of the heart,	ibid.	
4 Here lyes the greatest despisings of the Commacde-		
ments of God,	p.99	
To quicken the thankfulnesse of the godly,	ibid.	Use 4.
A seasonable Jtem to all Rebellious spirits,	p.100	
1 Is it not enough that thou hast willingly fallen in		
Adam, but thou must willingly stand out again?	p.101	
2 Consider the very Saints of God that have not		
half		

The Table.

shalfe so many will-nots as you, that stick more truly at a cannot, ib.

3 Consider the more shamefull ones sin is, the more reason to be humbled. p. 102

Nay fourthly consider there's no greater shame then to make away ones self, ib.

5 Consider if you would but vex your own soule with this serious consideration, it would make you kick your lusts under foot p. 103

The danger of base pleas and pretences:

1. This same pleading is the cause why you are lazie and idle in the use of the means, viz. because you suffer your hearts to plead, oh we cannot do it p. 104

2. This same pleading brings up an evil report upon piety and godlinesse p. 105

3. This same pleading is a murmuring against God, q. d. why does God give me such commandements that I cannot observe ibid.

4. This is the slowest excuse of all excuses p. 107

5. Nay here lies the reason why Divines say, that the conversion of a sinner is an harder work then the creation of heaven and earth, first because p. 108

Here is the same difficulty that was in creation, for God makes a convert of nothing ib.

2. As there was nothing præexistent in the creation to help, so there was nothing to resist; but here is something to resist, the wil it resisteth ib.

The danger of sticking at a wil-not is further cleared.

1. If you wil not, Gods Ministers have discharged their duties, and have left your blood on your own hands, p. 100

2. If you wil not, the Gospel hath delivered its errand, ye are guilty of your own everlasting perdition p. 111

Nay thirdly, if you wil not, the blood of Jesus Christ hath done that it came for p. 112

4. If you wil not, you murder your own souls ib.

A seasonable *Item* to the redeemed of the Lord, that they take heed of wil-nots; for ib.

1. We never sin against Gospel, nor despise God, but only upon wil-nots. p. 115

2. Conscience can never condemn us, nor God can never be angry with us, but only upon wil-nots p. 116

The end of the Table.



WILFULL
IMPENITENCY
THE GROSSEST
SELF-MURDER.

Ezek. 18. 31, 32.

For why wil ye die, O ye house of Israel?

THe wicked in this Chapter dispute against God; the Father hath eat en sower Grapes, and the childrens teeth are set on edge. Our Fathers have sinned, and we are punished; a common cavil in every naturall mans heart, when its urged. Adam fell, and his poor posterity smart for it, if God will needs darne us he may, we have no power for to help it; for who hath resisted his will? this is mans Syllogism. God who might send man to hell for answer, answers calmly.

The division of the Text.

1. By adjuration, as *I live*, saith the Lord, ye shall not have occasion to use this proverbe any more as *Israel*: v. 3.

2. By an assertion, the soule that sinneth, it shall dye, v. 4. no soule shall dye but only the same that doth sin.

3. By explication of himselfe; if a man do what which is right he shall live, vers. 5, 6. if he have bin never so wicked, yet if he returned he shall not dye, v. 21.

Gods calm answer to their forward cavils in particulars.

4. By

4. By appealing to their consciences; have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should dye saith the Lord? and not that he should returne and live? vers 23. have I any pleasure? I appeale to all your consciences, have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should dye?

5. By retorting; hear now O house of Israel, is not my way equall? or are not your wayes rather unequall? v. 25.

6. By a conclusion; therefore I will judge you O house of Israel, every one according to his wayes, vers. 30.

7. By a finall decision of the whole controversy; repent and turne your selves: &c. so iniquity shall not be your ruine? cast away from you all, &c. for why will ye die, &c.

Where we have these foure things.

1. God disclames all cause of their damnation from his secret will. I have no pleasure in the death of him that dyeth.

Four
things
very ob-
servable.

2. He removes all cause of the destruction from his revealed will; repent and turn your selves, &c. so iniquity shall not be your ruin? cast away, &c.

3. He disavowes all cause of their destruction from his permissive will, as though that were guilty, accessary to it; they can have no colour why they are not wrought upon; make you a new heart and a new spirit: Make not the fault lie at his dore, no it lies at your dore, make you a new heart.

4. He casts all cause of their destruction upon their own rebellious wills. Why will ye dye O house of Israel?

I What

1. What is the cause yee live in your finnes, and die and perish in your finnes? is it because I am not mercifull? you know I am gracious and full of mercy and ready to forgive; why then, why will ye die O house of Israel?

2. Is it because I am swift to revenge; you know I am slow to anger, and give you a warning before I consume you; why then will ye die O house of Israel? Israel's perdition not from God.

3. Is it because I will destroy you for Abex or Manasses, or Zedekiabs, or Adams sinne quasi canis peccatum sus dependeret you know that if the son walke^{us} in the fathers sinne, I use to receive him, you can beare me witnesse. I call you to a new covenant, why then will ye die O house of Israel.

4. Is it because ye have no Saviour? you know that the Lambe of God, Christ Iesus was slaine for you from the beginning of the World, that you may be saved upon faith. Rev. 13. 8. Jch. 3. 16.

5. Is it because ye have no power? ye know I offer you grace and power, and ye will not have it; why then will ye die, &c.

6. Some Authors alleadge five why's more, why wil ye, &c. Is it for this cause, or that cause, or that? or what cause is it? no cause on Gods side, no, ye may thanke your own wils if you perish; this, this only accuseth you, you will not be ruled: you are carelesse of God, Christ, grace, and you will be so, ye are vaine and carnall and obstinate, and ye will bee so; woe unto thee O Ierusalem, wilt thou not be made cleane? when shall it once be? Jer. 13. 27. he does not say woe unto thee Ierusalem, canst thou not be made cleane? Id unum vos accusat respicere non vultis.

but

but wilt thou not be made clean?

Presuppositions not to be mistaken.

1. *Presupposition not to be mistaken.* 1. Its true that a wicked man cannot repent nor be converted of himselfe; but this cannot only do's not hinder him; if a wicked mans cannot only did hinder him, he might excuse himself before the tri-

Licet aliquis cum possit gratiam adipisci qui reprobatur a deo; tamen quod in hoc vel illud peccatum labatur, ex ejus libero arbitrio contingit, unde & merito sibi in culpam imputatur. bunal of Christ, Lord, thou knowest I did my best. I would have bin ruled by thy word, but I could not: I would have bin humbled and reformed better then I was, but I could not. If a wicked mans cannot did hinder him, he might excuse himself thus. But alas, he is not able to say thus without peremptory lying. Lord, I could not chuse but do wickedly; I acted most wretchedly, but I could not otherwise chuse: though it was not in thy power not to be born in originall sinne; yet who necessitated thee to commit such grosse actuall sins? In Prov. 1.29. they hated knowledge, they did not chuse the feare of the Lord. They did not use any liberty of will to choose that which was good: What was it because they could not? no; for albeit they could not, yet that was not the cause. No they would none of my counsellis, they despised all my reproofe, v. 30. Marke, the reason why they did not choose, was not because they could not choose, but because they would not.

2. *Presup.* Its true God doth not give them power to believe, and to be renewed; but can they say though I would seriously, God would not? were they able to say thus? though I desired it heartily, God would not give me grace; then they had some

colour

colour to cast it upon God, I would, but God would not. But they cannot cast it upon him. How often would I have gathered thee together, even as a Hen gathereth her chickens, but thou wouldest not? I would, sayd God, but you would not; nay how often would I, but you would not? Mat. 3. 37. Mat. 23. 37. Though God be not so willing as to give them all power to believe, and be saved, yet he is *aforehand* with them.

Its true, if the wicked should will as far as they are able to will, yet their will were not *able* full out; but this doth not excuse them, because God alwayes resolved to be *aforehand* with them. Indeed as in Mat. 25. 29. God gives his servants this rule by which he ever goes towards them, unto everyone that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; speaking of things in *codem genere*. But to apply it to a man in the state of nature, is to say grace is given according to workes, which is the very dreggs of Pelagianisme. Yet however, all this is a most encouraging intimation. Let any man use the power that God gives him and he shall have more. As he that takes paines for learning: As he that useth meanes to increase his estate, may find in ordinary providence, the hand of the diligent makes rich. He that useth a penny well, makes it two pence; hee that useth two pennies very well, makes it a groat.

Facienti quod in se est, deus faciet quod in se Pelagia. Es. Pro. 10. 47 & 10. 22.

So that though there be not such an *Infalibilis nexus*, that God hath bound himselfe in the use of our naturall abilities to adde supernaturall graces, yet undoubtedly he will never be want-

ing to promote any good worke, till men neglect or contemne. And this leaves men wholly without excuse, and shewes it is not there cannot, but their will not, which betrays them to their spirituall losses; namely their wilfull rejecting of Gods gracious offers.

4 Presup Its true God gives the wicked but one Talent, when he giveth his children four, two at the least; but they cannot say he is austere, reaping where he sowed not, gathering where he strowed not. No, There's the same proportion between one Talent, and gathering one more, as there is betweene two, and the gathering of two others, &c.

You know that they are ready to complain, as Christ shewes it in the Parable. Lord, I know that thou wast a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sowed, and gathering, where thou hast not strowed: But ye remember also the Lords answer: Thou wicked and sloathfull servant, &c. Mat. 25. 26. Marke, he casts the blame upon his wilfulness, that he would not take paines for to trade. So the wicked complain, alas God hath not sowed any power of conversion in my heart, and will hee looke for to reape it? This is austere and hardnesse of dealing. Oh thou wicked and sloathfull servant, &c. Why didst thou not trade with the Talent that I gave thee? One Talent should beget one, as well as two beget two, &c. But I gave thee wit, and thou buriedst it in the earth, and hast bin earthly with it. I gave thee knowledge, and thou hast hid it in the earth, and not traded for reformation according to it, &c. Alas

Alas thou canst not plead *a cannot*, but onely a *will not*.

Its true, that if one wicked mans *will be more* Presup.
willing then another, it is not from *himselfe*, 1 Cor. 5. 7
but from *God*: For *what* hast thou *that thou hast*
not receiued ? 1 Cor. 4. 7. Its God that maketh
one wicked man to differ from another in
goodnesse, and to be *better then another*. One
wicked man is a *drunkard*, and another is better
&c. One wicked man is *more wilfull*, another
is *lesse*. Its God that makes this difference; yet
notwithstanding its his own fault, that he is
not *so good* as his neighbour, especially when he
sits under *better helpes* then his neighbour. The Mat. 14.
men of *Nineveh* shall rise up against this genera- 41.
tion, and shall condemne it, because they *repented*
at the preaching of Ionah, and behold a *greater*
then Ionah is here. See, this generation was worse
then Nineveh. *Nineveh* repented a great way, even
in *sackcloth* and *ashes*, but this *generation* doth
not. I grant it was *God* that did make them do
more then this generation doth do. For all
would be *alike wilfull* if it were not for him.
But yet this generation cannot plead in *judgement*,
Lord, thou wast not so *gracions* unto us
as to *Nineveh*: No, Iesus Christ expressly telleth
them, *Nineveh* shall rise up in judgement against
them *q. d.* *Nineveh* was not *so wilfull as you*; *Nineveh*
would, but you would not. Our *Saviour*
Christ ascribes it to their *wilfullnesse*, that they
were not so willing as *Nineveh* *Nineveh* would,
but you would not. Thus you see, the suppositi-
ons, which I beseech you remember as we go,
lest perhaps you mistake us.

Deut.

The reason why the wicked do not repent nor come out of their sinnes, is not because they cannot, (though they cannot) but because they will not.

Act. 5. 31

Peter saith to Ananias, Why hath Satan filed thy heart to lye, to the holy Ghost, to keepe back part of the price of the Land? was it not once in thy power? Before thou didst promise, 'twas in thy power whether thou wouldst promise or no, did any force thee to promise? and when thou hadst promised, did any squeeze the lye out of thy tongue that thou shouldst tell a lie to the Holy Ghost? did any drag thy finger to the mony and force thee to handle it no thou wouldst lie, and thou wouldst finger it.

7 Demonstrations to prove this.

1 Demon.

1. The wicked thinke they have power to repent.

Prov. 6. 10

All the freewill-mangers reason why they do not repent, is because they wil not, out of their own mouth will God condemne them.

1. The wicked thinke they have power, and yet they will not doe according to their thoughts. What's the reason, they presume to repent another time, but because they thinke they have power? what's the reason, they hope to repent on their death beds, but because they thinke they have power? or at least that they are able to beg power of Christ Iesus. Now by their own thoughts God will convince them, that they do not give over their sinnes, because they will not; like the sluggard, yet a little more sleepe, yet a little more slumber, yet a little more folding of the hands to sleepe; the sluggard, he thinks he can rise time enough, and do all his businesse e're the night, though he lie a little longer; and therefore does he presume to lie a while longer; So thou art loth to come out of thy sinnes yet, time enough yet thinkest thou, thou hast secret thoughts thou art

art able to shift for Heaven afterwards; tush an unhappy youth may make a good old man, and a young Saint an old Devill. Hence it is that the Whoremaster he can plead, did not David commit adultery too? as though he could get up againe as well as he; the drunkard, was not Noah drunke? as though he were able to repent as well as he. *The Thiefe on the Crosse, did not he repent at last gaspe?* as though he could shift as well at last; so they thinke they can leave off their sinnes for a need; and therefore the reason why they do not, is *onely* because they *will not*. He that thinkes he hath a hundred Pound of his own in his purse, and yet will not give a poore body a halfe penny, what's the reason hee will not open his purse to give? because hee cannot? No, he thinkes he hath it and can; but hee will not; so the reason why thou art not reformed, is, thou *wilt not*.

Luk. 25.
40.

2. Demonstration, because thou dost not so much as try whether thou canst or no. Therefore thou dost not stick at a cannot, but a will not; when a Master bids his servant carry a sack of Corne to the Mill; I cannot sayes he; but cannot you try, sayes his Master, cannot you go about it? no, he *will not try*; why then he is wilfull; if his Master should see him sweating and striving to carry it, it were something, then he would say he stuck at a cannot; but when he *will not be at the paines to try*, he stickes at a will not. So thou stickst at a will not, thou dost not every day in *arenam descendere* sweat at good duties, thou dost not study and labour

2 Demon.
2. They will not try.

Tenantes
ad Trojam
pervenire
Græci.
Theo.

thinkst thou, thou hast secret thoughts, thou every day to *shun all temptations*, and prevent *all thy sins*, thou dost not goe about the cleansing of thy Family, the purging of thy House, thou *wilt not* goe about it, and therefore the reason is, because that thou *wilt not*. Nay its all one whether thou hast power yea or no. To what end should God give thee *power*? for thou *wilt not* use it. Nay, how dost thou *know* but when thou goest about it, thou mayest meet with, though some *power*? but thou *wilt not try*; cut down thy drunken signe, and *try*, never let drinking and swilling be in thy house, and *try*, set up constant holy conferences and *try*; frequent Prayer in thy Closet and *try*, &c. But I have tryed again and again, and yet it will not do; every day try though, *si crebro jacias, alias aliud jeceris*, though thou hast thrown the Dye a hundred times, yet next time may be thou shalt throw a good cast; But thou *wilt not try*. I would have healed Babel, but *she would not be healed*. The field of the slothful was all grown over with Thornes, and Nettles had covered all the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down, Prov: 24. 31. what's the reason he hath not a good crop? because the ground would not bear it? no, how does he know? he *will not try*, he will not plow it and *barrow* it, and *weed* it and *manure* it, and *sow* it, he *will not try*, therefore tis because he *will not*.

3 Demon.
They re-
fuse the
helpe
which
God
offe

3. Demonstration. God offers the many good motions of power: I will helpe thee, and I will inable thee, and thou *wilt not be helped*; God casts

casts in these good motions, and thou casts them out. Stand ye in the waies, and so, ask for the old paths, and walk therein, and ye shall finde rest to your soules; but they said, we will not walke therein. O doe but ask for the good way, and labour to walk in it, He help you, and assist you; but we will not, say they. I set watchmen over you, saying, *Hearken to the sound of the Trumpet*, but they said *We will not hearken*, vers. 17. This is plain English, as we say, *you will not*; ye have preaching every Sabbath, and every week, but ye will not; God sends you good motions every day and houre, but ye will not; when a beggar will not be helpt, why does he starve? what because he cannot choose? no, he starves because he *will starve*. O saiest thou, I doe heare the word, and I cannot heare it better. I doe pray daily, and I cannot pray better, &c. Thus thou retortest upon God, as the *unprofitable servant*, Lo, there thou hast that is thine: Loe, here's the best faith thy spirit helps me to, here's the best obedience that thy power enabled me to; &c. Lo, there thou hast that is thine, thou helpest me with no more. I was not able to doe better; *quo ore potest hoc dicere?* saies Gualter, with what face canst thou say thus? is this all that God hath offered to enable thee? ah thou wilful creature; The Lord hath offered to helpe thee to a thousand times more, but thou wouldst not be helped.

Jer. 6. 16.

Mat. 25.

4 Demon.

4. Demonstration. God hath not onely offered the power to doe more, and thou wilt not take it, but also given thee more power, and thou wilt not

And wil not use power which he hath given.

Prov. 1. 16.

not use it, and therefore the reason why thou dost not, is because thou wilt not; God hath given thee one *talent of power* at the least; why dost thou not put it out to the *merchandizers* and occupy with it? *ταλαντον εκασου δυναμις*, says *Chrys.* The power that God hath vouchsafed thee is thy *talent*. Why didst not thou imploy it to the utmost? every Sermon gives thee a new power, a new price? so every good counsell gives thee a new power; what art thou better? every blessing thou hast had, gives thee a new power, wherein art thou purer? does God give thee but eyes? thou hast more power to glorify him then he that hath none, &c. Every *mercy* helps thee with new power; but wherein dost thou use it? God hath given thee good memory, how hast thou stult it? meanes and maintenance: how hast thou honoured God? why, &c. thine own conscience accuseth thee, thou hast wasted his goods, wasted them upon belly and back, which have devoured more thoughts then ever his worship could have, thou hast wasted them upon thy credit in the World, and thy pleasure, and thy lusts, and thy fleshly desires. How is it that I heare this of thee? Thou shalt heare one day of this disinnall watch, word, give account of thy stewardship, for thou mayst be no longer steward. What dost thou talking of thy want of power? I could not doe this, and I could not do that; where are my goods that I lent thee? give account for thy memory. Lord, I remember this and that *Tale*, this and that *bawble*; thou evill and unprofitable servant thou, and why couldst thou

thou not remember my Commandements as well? give account for thy wit. Lord I have contrived busineses, bargaines with it, I have jested, quirked, been merry with it; thou evill and unprofitable servant thou, why wouldst thou not be witty for God, and for the good of thy soule? &c. God hath given a great deale of more power then ever thou bringest to act, and therefore thou art wilful.

5. Demonstration; the more power thou hast to repent, the more *thy will is against it.* 5. Demon. They grow by the means. The more meanes that God doth vouchsafe, the more Preaching, the more knowledge, the more reproofes, the more inlightnings, the more power thou hast to repent, the more *thy will is against it.* Bernard sayes, such a one is a perverse man that God is faine to say to, *quid faciam tibi?* what shall I doe unto thee? O Ephraim, what shall I doe unto thee? for thy righteousness goes away like the dew. *Hof. 6.* Hof. 4. 6.

4. The more meanes thou enjoyest, the more thy righteousness goes away; one would thinke the more the *Sun shine* of the Gospel ariseth, the more your righteousness should encrease; it goes the more away, like the dew the more the *Sun riseth*, the more it vanisheth away; like many of you, the more Preaching you have, the farther yee are off; a man might be acquainted with you heretofore, but now that you have been soundly rebuked for your sins, the further you flye off; nay some of you that were somewhat forward heretofore, are *makers* now; some of you that were somewhat *towardly* heretofore, are more covetous and

and *waspysh*, and *Passionate*, and *Worldly*: like the wreds, the more they are pluckt up the more they doe grow; or like the earth, the more it is washed, the dirtier it proves: so the more means ye have to be enabled to good, the *wilfuller* ye are.

6 Demon

Their
cannot is
voluntary

A Morall
imporency.

6. Demonstration; because *thy cannot*, is a *voluntary cannot*; thou hast wilfully brought the most part of thy cannot upon thee. I cannot give to the poore sayest thou; yea, but thou hadst it once, and thou hast wilfully spent it; thou hadst Lands and Meanes, and comings in, but thou hast spent it at the Alehouse; thou hast consumed it on the gamehouse. Thus *thy cannot*, is a voluntary cannot, *causa causa est causa causati*: thy *will* was the cause of thy *cannot*, and therefore thy *will*, is the cause of thy not giving to the poore. I cannot read, sayes one, and no marvaile if I be ignorant; but thy Parents would have set thee to Schoole, and thou wouldst be a trewant, therefore thou art willingly ignorant; I cannot remember a Sermon sayes another, no wonder though I repeat it not in my Family, but forget it as I doe: but thou hast willingly ram'd it with matters of the World, or hast weakned it with drinking, and therefore thou art wilfully forgetfull, &c. The unprofitable servant was curst that had layd up his pound safe in a Napkin: hee did not lessen it, nor imbezele it, but onely layd it up, and yet hee was curst because hee did not διπλαῖν προσετιγχεῖν, sayes Chrysost. hee was curst because hee did not double his pound,

Luke 19.

20.

Chrysost.

pound; ah the woful estate that thou art in! if he were accursed that did lay up his pound, what shall become of thee that dost lessen it? hee did not double his abilities, and therefore he was cursed; thou dost not onely *not double* thy abilities, but thou *dost lessen them.* *Lessen* God hath inabled thee to doe many a thing, and now thou art not able; thou hast *willingly* lessened thine *ability*; now then thou canst not excuse thy selfe that thou *canst not*, because thou hast brought this *cannot on thy selfe*: Thou canst *not* weepe at a Sermon, but thou couldst once; thou canst not resist such a lust, but thou couldst once, and thou hast willingly brought this *cannot on thy soule*, and therefore this is all the cause because *that thou wilt not.*

7. Demonstration. May be thou canst not, 7 *Demon.* yea, but thou art *contented with thy cannot*; thou canst not bee holy, and thou art *contented not to be*; thou canst not crucifie thy lust, and thou art *contented with this cannot*, nay thou *wouldst not be able.* Sir, I tell you how you may put up this injury if you will; but Sir you shall not make me put it up, *I will not be directed by you*, as it was with desperate Judah, my people love to have it so. Thou art carnal, and thou lovest to be so; were a man in the stockes, and not able Jer. 5.31. to get out, yet if he be contented to be there though he cannot get out, that is not the reason of his staying but *he will not*; thou canst not walke humbly and holily, and thou *lovest to have it so*; what would you have me so

They are
contented
with
their can-
not.

glad

so pure forsooth ? So then the reason is because that thou wilt not ; if thy will were not it, thou wouldst never be content with thy *cannot* ; the Congregation is bad , and thou lovest to have it so , the more custome thou shalt have for thy Ale-house ; like a bad Clerke of the *Affizes* , I heard one speake it my selfe, he was glad there was so many Rogues, hee had the more money ; so some of you are glad there be so many frequenters of the *Ale-bench* , yee have the more custome, ye love to have it so , ye cannot reforme the sinnes of one another, and yee love to have it so.

The Presuppositions premised , and the Demonstrations prefixed , it follows now that I lay down the ground of this necessary truth. (Scil.)

The reason why a wicked man doth not turne unto God, is not because he cannot (though he cannot) but because he will not.

Hee cannot say this at the day of Judgement, Lord, thou knowest I left every sin that I could, and I took all the best courses that I could to become a new creature, but I could not. A wicked man shall not be able to say thus without lying. The man in the Gospel that had not on the wedding garment , could he say, Lord, I was not able to goe to the shop of the Gospel, to seeke one ? No, he was speechlesse, *Matth. 22.12.* God finds out the hypocrite , though but one , and when once discovered, he is confounded and silenced with the guilt of his own wilfulnesse.

The first Ground.

The first Ground is this, which is observed by our learned *Divines* at the *Synod at Dort*, namely, Art 3. &
4. in re fut.
3. 4. error.
posit.

Every man can doe no more good then hee does, and shew more evill then hee does, though I confesse not in a gracious manner. If I can prove this to be true, it will necessarily follow that the reason why a wicked man does not *returne*, is not because he cannot, but onely because he will not.

Arguments to prove it.

I. Consider, if a man can doe more then hee doth, nothing can hinder him from doing more then hee does but *his will*; when the fire can burne more, it doth burne more, because it hath no will to come betweene the power of burning and the act of burning to suspend it. The fire is a natural agent, and therefore burnes as much as it can: but a man is a voluntary agent, and therefore when he can do a thing and does not, 'tis because his will comes between to suspend it: So that the reason is this, *hee will not*. Pilate hee had power to crucifie Christ, and power not to doe it, *John 19. 10.* hee had power not to doe it; why then does he crucifie him? not because he had no power to doe otherwise; hee confesses himselfe hee had power to doe otherwise, but he crucified Christ, because hee would doe so. When a man hath power to doe a thing, or not to doe a thing; I Consid.
Every
man can
doe more
good then
he doth.

Its

Its the will that either suspends or determines.

2. *Confid.*

*because a
must first doe
that which
he can*

2. Consideration, that if a man can do more then he does, and yet will not, he must *needs* voluntarily hinder himselfe from doing that which he cannot; the reason is, because a man must first doe that which he can, before he can come to that part which he cannot. Suppose a lame man were to goe to London from hence, and not able to goe one mile of the journey, but there stands one at the Church-stile, that offers if he will but crawle thither, to carry him; he is able to crawle so farre as the Church-stile, but he will not; does not he voluntarily hinder himselfe from going to London? that which he can doe, must be done first, before that which he cannot. So yee that live in your finnes, you must first doe that which you can, before you can looke that God should helpe you to doe that which you cannot; if thou dost all that thou canst, for ought that thou knowest, Christ, though he have not absolutely engaged himselfe, stands at the Church-stile, there ready to help thee. There be men in the world whom hee is resolved to help; thou dost not know but thou art the man. Christ hath not told thee any thing to the contrary, but onely he bids thee do what thou canst; canst not thou cut off thy long haire? are no Sizzers able to cut it? have not you a Tongue in your heads, yee that keep disorders in your Ale-houses? cannot you say get you hence yee drunken companions, here's no entertainment for you? you must doe that which you can, before you can expect Christs help

help to doe that which you cannot ; and if you will not doe that which you can, you *doe voluntarily hinder your owne selves from doing that which you cannot* ; *Joshua* could not stand before *Ai*, nor hinder a close *Achan* from taking the golden *wedge*; but when it was taken and known, he was able to make him an example. *Joshuah* he fasted and cryed unto God all day untill night, that the Lord would mercifully *save him and all Israel* ; Now heare that answer the Lord gives him, Get thee up sayth he, why lyest thou here ? *Josh. 7. 10. Israel hath sined, go and execute Iustice, go and do that first, and then I will answer thee about Ai* ; for if *Joshuah* would not havh done what he could, the Lord would never have helpt him to do that which he could not. So thou prayst for mercy and grace, oh that God would convert thee, and pardon thee ; get thee up sayes God, dost thou stand praying for mercy as long as such things and such things are not reformed ? thou hast drunkenesse in thy house, go and reforme that ; thou art in league with a sort of base lusts, goe and reforme them ; if thou wilt not doe that which thou canst, how canst thou be sure God will help thee to doe that which thou canst not ? no thou stickst at *a will not*, as long as thou refuset to do that.

3. Consider if a man will not doe that which he can, neither will he doe that which he cannot if he could ; the servant that will not goe five or six miles in a day which he can for his Master, neither would he goe a hundred miles for his Master if he could ; you that can reforme outwardly

3 *Confid.*

wardly, at least if you would, and yet will not, neither would you reforme more if you could; ye have money in your purses, cannot you spend it better then upon swilling and drinking and gaming? *ye can well enough; but ye will not.* So you would doe, had you that true riches, *Luke 16. 11.* ye have *naturall abilities*; if ye will not be faithfull in them, so it would be if so be ye had better; ye that have *moral and civil endowments*, if ye will not be faithfull in them, neither would you if God should lend you more, &c. ye are able to avoid swearing and lying, but ye will not, neither would ye avoyd all other sinnes if ye could; if a man will not doe *that which he can*, neither will hee doe *that which hee cannot if hee could.*

4. Consider, *If a man will not doe that which he can*, can or cannot all's one to him, all sticks at his will. I cannot repent, and I cannot give over my sinnes, sayest thou; and I pray thee who told thee that thou canst not? I am naked sayes Adam, and who told thee that thou wert naked? sayes God, *Gen. 3. 11.* So may I say, who told thee thou canst not? does not thy own conscience tell thee tis because thou wilt not? I cannot digge sayes the lazy Steward, and to begge I am ashamed, *Luke 16. 3.* I cannot digge; if he had a cudgell about his back, it would make him to digge; to begge I am ashamed, sayes he; he was not ashamed to cozen his Master of his goods, but he was ashamed to begge. I have married a Wife and I cannot come, *Luke 14. 20.* No, what did his Wife tie his legges? there

is a Lyon in the way; I cannot goe out sayes the *Prov. 22: 13.*
 sluggard: alas thy owne sluggish wilfull wills
 are this cannot. Can or cannot all's one to them,
 they never come to try whether they can, yea
 or no: the sluggard never lookt out to see the
 Lyon in the way, but he dreamt there was one
 there, and hee was willing to believe it, hee
 would not goe out to see: the idle steward did
 not trie whether he could digge, yea or no; if
 he had taken the Spade in his hand, and gone
 about the work, 'twere another matter; but I
 cannot dig, saies he, he never would put it to
 trial, but takes another course without trying
 of that; so that all's one can or cannot, if a
 man will not do that which he can, can or can-
 not, all's one to him.

5. Consider, *5: Consi.* If a man will not doe that which
 hee can, this will make a mans conscience when
 it comes to speake in sober sadnesse, thanke him-
 selfe for his perishing; mens consciences doe but
 jest with them now, while they can say, tush tis
 because I cannot believe, and because I cannot
 repent; but at the houre of conviction, or the day
 of Judgement at farthest, then conscience will
 speake in sober sadnesse, when I was hungry, ye
 gave mee no meate, sayes Christ, when I was a-
 thirst yee gave mee no drinke, I was a stranger
 and yee tooke mee not in, sick and in prison and ye
 visited mee not, Matth. 25. 43. Mark, Christ puts
 no cannots on their consciences at the day of judg-
 ment; could they say, alas, we had never a bit
 of bread for to doe it, never a drop of drink
 for to do it? no, you shall see how their con-
 sciences were mute; they could not say that they
 D could

could not; could not ye comfort Christs deare members as well as mock them? couldst thou not take them into thy house as well as carnall acquaintance? its worthy observation to consider, that generally Gods threathnings do not run against Cannots, nor his judgements against Cannots, but against mens particular finnes, that they might have avoyded; for though mens finfull coniciences doe necessarily incline men to sinne, yet not unto this sinne, nor that sinne, non determinat necessario ad hoc vel illud malum, hic & tunc, say our Brittain Divines at the Syned. Sinfull concupiscence does not necessarily determine men upon these and these finnes, with the particular circumstances which they live in, as this rapine, this lye, &c. thus ye see this will make a sure ground of our Doctrine if so be we can prove it.

Every man can do more good then he does, and avoid more evill then he does.

This is a most certaine and infallible truth, and needs no confirmation, but I will prove it notwithstanding.

- 1 Argu. First because God doth complaine against the wicked for the voluntary doing no more good then they doe; what so much preaching and no more good? so many meanes and no more fruit? &c. so God complaines against Israel, nevertheless they departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, &c. and there remained the groves also in Samaria, 2 Kings 13. 6. the grove also; what not so much as the grove cut down? and ye must have the finnes of Ieroboam; that were enough stubbornesse

ness one would think; but must yee suffer the *grove also*? reforme nothing, no, not the grove under your face? see how God girdeth their wilfull security that they would do no more good then they did; nor so much as cut downe that grove? so many warnings and threatnings, &c. and yet the grove also? yet thy filthy Tongue, thy covetousnesse also, &c. not only keepe thy other lusts, but thy prophaneesse also.

Secondly, because otherwise there were no roome for praise nor dispraise, if a man could do no more good then he does, nor shun no more evill then he does, then no man could be praised nor dispraised; you know that wicked men and women may do many commendable things, at least more commendable ones then others; does not our Saviour discommend Bethsaida and Corazin, in comparison of Tyre and Sidon? woe unto thee Corazin, woe unto thee Bethsaida; for if the mighty workes which have been done in thee, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented in sackcloth and ashes, *Math. 11. 21.* might not they have shewed so much repentance at the least? could not they have put on sackcloth on their loynes, and poured ashes on their heads if they would? they might have done so much at the least, and honoured the workes and Preaching of our Saviour with an outward honour at the least. You that have such abundant teaching as yee have, yee might honour the Gospel with some outward honour at the least, that would be more commend-

2. Argu.
Tamen si
impossibile
erat Iudeis
converti
per exter-
nam præli-
cationem
Evangelii,
absque præ-
determina-
tione grati-
æ: quia ta-
men obdu-
rati ores e-
rant Iudei
propria
malitia
quàm Tyrii
& Sidonii,
idecirco à
scrutatore
cordium
corripimur
Doct. Prid-
lect. de
med. sci-
ent. p. 69

could not; could not ye comfort *Christs* deare members as well as mock them? couldst thou not take them into thy house as well as carnall acquaintance? its worthy observation to consider, that generally Gods threatenings do not run against *Cannots*, nor his judgements against *Cannots*, but against mens particular finnes, that they might have avoyded; for though mens finfull consciences doe necessarily incline men to sinne, yet not unto this sinne, nor that sinne, non determinat necessario ad hoc vel illud malum, hic & tunc, say our *Brittaine Divines* at the Synod. Sinfull concupiscence does not necessarily determine men upon these and these finnes, with the particular circumstances which they live in, as this rapine, this lye, &c. thus ye see this will make a sure ground of our Doctrine if so be we can prove it.

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Secondly, because otherwise there were no roome for praise nor dispraise, if a man could do no more good then he does, nor shun no more evill then he does, then no man could be praised nor dispraised; you know that wicked men and women may do many commendable things, at least more commendable ones then others; does not our Saviour discommend Bethsaida and Corazin, in comparison of Tyre and Sidon? woe unto thee Corazin, woe unto thee Bethsaida; for if the mighty workes which have been done in thee, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented in sackcloth and ashes, Math. 11. 21. might not they have shewed so much repentance at the least? could not they have put on sackcloth on their loynes, and poured ashes on their heads if they would? they might have done so much at the least, and honoured the workes and Preaching of our Saviour with an outward honour at the least. You that have such abundant reaching as yee have, yee might honour the Gospel with some outward honour at the least, that would be more commend-

2. Argu.
Tametsi
impossibile
erat Iudeis
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per exter-
nam præli-
cationem
Evangelii,
absque præ-
determi-
nante gra-
tia: quia ta-
men obdu-
rati oes e-
rant Iudei
propria
malitia
quàm Tyrii
& Sidonii,
idecirco à
scrutatore
cordium
corripitur
Doct. Pridr
lect. de
med. sci-
ent. p. 67.

able, which most of you will not.

3. *Argu.* Thirdly, because otherwise there *would be no roome for the sword of the Magistrate*; if a man could omit no more sinne then hee does, then what meanes our Pillories and Gallows, &c. and other punishments upon Malefactors? will any man be so vaine as to say *Achan could not chuse but take the Babylonish garment*? certainly he might have let it alone if he would: why hast thou troubled us, saies *Joshuah*, Josh. 7. 25. Alas, he was not able to answer, oh Sir I could doe no otherwise! No, no, hee might have omitted it, and therefore the Law of man is favourable to such as offend against their wills; it does not hang such as kill against their wills.

4. *Argu.* Fourthly, because though a carnall man cannot put off the old man, nor shake off the dominion of sinne in generall, nor deny himselfe, but his very nature is sinfull and fleshly, he does naturally sinne, yet it is not his nature to commit this sinne at this time, and in this manner; the wickedest man under Heaven goes about his sinne with *previall deliberation*, and a most free disposition of the meares; the drunkard goes freely into the Ale-house, and calls freely for a jugge or two or three, as his lust is; his Host hee freely suffers these disorders in his house, and freely goes to the Tap and does draw it, &c. *Ephraim did willingly walke after the Commandement*, Hof. 5. 11. The wicked King of Israel commanded them that will worship at Bethel, and they did freely and willingly obey it. Pilate willingly contented the people,

people, and therefore he *scourged our Saviour*, Mark. 15. 15. For though all this was done by the determinate counsel of God, yet Gods counsel put no simple necessity upon his will, hee did freely and willingly doe it; the wicked they turne the grace of God into wantonnesse, Jude 4. Marke, the Grace of God; Grace whereby they might doe more good then they doe, and avoid more evill then they doe. Its true, a wicked man is the *servant of sin*, and cannot but sin, hee is naturally a servant of sinne; of sinne I say, but he is *voluntarily and freely a servant of this sinne*, for the Lord gives him reason, and counsel, and good motions, and many common graces, whereby he may be freed from this or that act, but *hee will not*, hee will break out into these and these filthy passionate words now and then; say reason what it will, and common grace what it will, he will doe it, he will doe this, and he will doe that. I confesse, that when a wicked man is *desperate, and given up of God*, then it is otherwise, then his will is so greedy, that hee cannot take it off; but hee is the more *inexcusable*, because his will is then double.

Fifthly, *A wicked man can doe more good, &c.* 5. *Argu.* for a godly regenerate soule may avoyde more sin then hee does. Though God have freed him from the slavery of sinne, and he is become the servant of righteousness, Rom. 6. 18. nevertheless they may do more good then they do, and avoide sinne a great deale more then they doe; what man will say that David could not otherwise chuse but commit that adultery which hee did

Insuperabiliter movet, quamvis sit aliqua resistencia.

did, and that murder which he did? I appeal to your consciences yee soules that are godly. When yee pray forgive us our Trespases, doe not yet acknowledge with all that ye have been wanting to the grace of God? Do not ye confesse it with shame that you have given way to sundry temptations that by the grace of God ye might have overcome? And that yee have omitted many a good opportunity, that by the grace of God yee might have made use of? I deny not but God does irresistibly convert his Elect at the first, and infallibly carry them on to the end for the maine, but in particular actions hee does not so; but though their wills bee now free by grace, yet they may freely sinne, even then when they obey: and freely obey, even then when they transgresse; and so they are forced to confesse they might avoyde more evil then they doe, and doe more good then they doe.

Againe, A wicked man may doe more good then hee does, and avoid more evil then hee does; I prove it by induction upon his conscience

By these Particulars.

First, for the outward acts of sinne in the members; thus all profane persons, drunkards, &c. yee are all convinced undeniably in your consciences, these are sinnes in the very outward memb

ut ait it is domina membrorum;

... house

as?

Q. 21

lying? &c. your owne Teeth and Lipps shall judge you, &c. If you doe not root out these sinnes, its without doubt because yee *will not*. The Lord hath made all the outward man at the *command of the will*; and therefore if the outward man be out of order, tis because yee will; *μηδεις εν λεγειται ετις τ ελαττον εχει εδεν δυνειται ποιησαι*, sayes *Chrysost*. Let no man say I have but one Talent, and I have no power to be good; a Talent hath power to goe for a Talent, and I: d. for a shilling, and if it doe not, tis because yee *will not*. Hast thou not power over thine owne outward members vouchsaf'd thee of God? the Lord in mercy lets thy will have a despoticall power over thy members, as the Morallists call it, and why canst thou not bridle them? as *Christ said* th the Officer that smote him, *If I have spoken well, why smitest thou me?* John 18. 23. Couldst thou not have held in thy fingers? thou art inexcusable then for all thy profane sinnes.

I. Argu:
Amor sui
ipsum est
objectum
motivum; at
Amor Dei
ipsum est
tantum ob-
jectum ter-
minativum
Amef. Cal.
consc. de
charit. er-
ga Deum.

Secondly, *Thou hast natural affections in thee*, and by them thou mayst doe more good then thou dost, and sin more evil then thou dost. Thus all civill Professors are left inexcusable: Canst thou not get more strictness of walking, though not for love unto God, yet for love unto thy selfe? bee more frequent in good duties for hope of Heaven, and for feare of Hell; that's better then nothing; better doe them so then not at all. What cannot a man doe for selfe-love and for feare? there is never a duty of Religion, but a man may every day doe for love unto himselfe and for feare. God hath left

lest these affections in thy soule on purpose. I know this is not enough; but what of that? Why dost thou not goe so far as thou mayest? what aileth thee that thou canst not tame downe thy pride for feare of Gods judgements, and bridle thy base passions for feare of Hell? It is not unknowne that God hath vowed to destroy all the workers of iniquity: Tis not unknowne that he hath prepared Hell for such as thou art, as long as thou livest as thou dost: Thou knowst this is true, and thou knowst God will be as good as his word, and thou art not able to abide it. Why dost thou not curbe thy proud stubborne lusts for feare of this Hell? That's better then nothing; if thou canst not doe it for love, yet why canst thou not doe it for feare? hast thou not as much reason as a brute creature, that is greedy of meat, yet a whip-stick is able to scare him from it? an horse is desirous to stand still, yet a spur and a rod is able to make it go faster; and is not Hell more fearfull then all rods? Why dost thou not take heed for feare, lest God should send thee to Hell? a sinner and a hypocrite are inexcusable herein, for Hell may feare them; the sinners in Sion are afraid, fearefulness hath surprised the hypocrites; who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? Esay 33. 14. who of us is able to dwell with everlasting flames? and hypocrites may goe so farre; feare Hell, and abstaine from a million of sinnes, for feare of these everlasting burnings: canst thou say thou canst not resist sinne for feare of Gods judgements? No, thou canst resist sinne for feare

of

Quis poterit? as Montanus hath it.

of lesse evils then so ; the feare of mens seeing thee can keepe thee from committing adultery in the market-place , and cannot the feare of God restraine thee from it in private ? thou darest not transgresse the *Kings Lawes* for feare of the Gallowes ; and cannot the feare of Hell restraine thee from *transgressing of Gods ? Gods displeasure* is greater then the Kings, and thou knowest it : God is truer in his Law then any, mortal man , and thou knowest it : and fearest thou not mee ? *feare yee not mee, saith the Lord ? will yee not tremble at my presence, Jer.5. 22.* Canst thou say thou art not able to feare him so much as servilely ? that is not so , for when thou art sick , and ready to dye , then thou wilt feare him , then oh thou wouldst faine become a new creature , and all out of feare of the great God ; and canst thou not now ? No, no, now here be pleasures to be had, and thou *wilt have them* ; here is the World, and thou wilt carke ; here is businesse, and thou wilt be doing , and thou wilt not finde leasure for God. No, thou wilt not ; canst thou not do this *that God bids thee at least out of fear ?* this is nothing but a lye of *Satan*, thou wouldst do them all for feare of a man. Suppose there were Lawes made that every man who does not pray in his Family Morning and Evening should assuredly be hanged : whosoever swears an Oath , should bee hanged as soone as hee hath sworne it : Whosoever breakes out into any bitter rayling speech , should suffer death. Suppose I say to all the duties of *Religion it is death to omit them, and the King had made*
such

such a certaine sure Law, I dare say there would be many millions of Professors more in England then there are; rather then yee would be gibbeted, many swearers would never sweare more; many lyars never lye more; many profane householders never omit Prayers in their Families more; and couldst thou doe this for fear of a man? why canst thou not then do it for fear of the great God?

3 *Consid.* Thirdly, The Lord hath given thee naturall counsel, and naturall reason and prudence: O sayest thou, I am tempted before I am aware, and the passion is up before I am aware, I cannot help it for my life. No, I believe thee when the Devil is once up, there is no alaying that foul Fiend for the present; Thou canst not immediately allay it. But why canst thou not prevent it with counsel and deliberation? the very Heathens have done this, and thou hast advantage of all Heathen. God hath given thee not onely reason in thy head, and a naturall conscience in thy breast, but also direction in his Word to prevent it, and if thou dost not, thou wilt not: are the lusts of thine appetite violent? why then dost thou not fore-cast for to reine them? why dost thou not abstaine from going to Feasts a while? why dost thou not stint thy Trencher with so much? if thy lusts be on fire, why dost thou feed them with fuell? Are the lusts of anger and wrath predominate in thee? thou rapst out an Oath before thou art aware; why then dost thou not as Chrysostome would have thee, Set forfeitures for every Oath? Why dost thou not intreat Gods people severely.

verely to reprove thee, and exact a fine of thee for every *misgoverning word*? Why dost thou not bawke such acquaintance as may occasion thy Tongue to cast out Oaths? Why dost thou not club downe thy lusts with argument upon argument? Shall I be touchy to be damned, and proud to bee damned? &c. *even arguments of selfe-love* are able to knock them downe. I doe not know how; No? that's because thou wilt not know; *They know not neither will they understand*, Psal. 82. 5. So thou knowest not, neither wilt thou understand; that's the reason thou still *walkest in darknesse*; why dost not thou oppose thy lusts at first rising? *non obtinebis ut desinat, si incipere permiseris*, sayes *Seneca*; thou canst never get victory except thou be here first in the Field. The Lord hath given thee counsels on this fashion; why dost thou not use them? onely because thou wilt not; hast thou impediments? *Clarancus* had them too, but he overcame them sayes *Seneca*. Why dost not thou? if thou wilt not, thou dost willingly perish; thou mightst doe more then thou dost, but thou wilt not; and thou mightst stunne more then thou dost, but thou wilt not.

Fourthly, because thou wilt say all these things are but *natural* and *moral* and *civil*, I may perish for all these; but alas I am not able to doe any thing; I cannot believe, I cannot be very true, yet thy

1 Kings
21.29.

Spiritual, and if thou stickest there, thou stickest at a will not. The Lord hath taken a sufficient course to humble thee, and thou wilt not be humbled; thou sayest thou canst not obey spiritually, I grant it, its most true: nor repent spiritually: why then wilt thou not be humbled that canst not? As God said to Pharaoh, *How long wilt thou refuse to humble thy selfe before me? Exodus 10. 3.* There is externall humiliation, as Ababs humiliation, thou mayest com to, before that humiliation thou canst not express: why art thou not humbled with that which thou mayst:

First, then why dost thou not see thy case to bee *damnable*? Dost thou not know that judgment is past upon all to damnation? *Rom. 5.18. All men are damned out of Christ.* Whosoever is not a *new creature*, is not in Christ, but is a damned man to this day: thou knowest the Lord himselfe doth say thus: what hinders thee now from deducting a particular therefrom? If upon all men, then upon me; if all be damned to this day that are not *new creatures in Christ*, then I am a damned man to this houre: This *Logick* God doth vouchsafe thee; why dost thou not reason on this fashion? I am a damned man and a damned woman to this day: if thou wouldst be brought to this passe there might be some hope of thee, *but thou wilt not*; thou wilt scrape up some hopes or other, thou wilt not beleieve this. Beleeve thus, *sayes God*; but I will not, sayest thou: no, thou wilt have thy lust still, and thou wilt not beleieve this; if thou wouldst be-
leive

lieve verily thou art a *damned man*, because thou art not a *new creature in Christ*, may be thou wouldst never have done till thou art one, thou wouldst forsake all, and follow *Christ in all things*, but thou wilt not.

Secondly, but I cannot sayest thou: why then wilt thou not *despaire in thy selfe*? a man must despaire as hee is, otherwise he can never get into *Christ*: as long as a man lives and does after the flesh, hee can have no true hope of mercy, or pardon, or any thing, no, hee is a *dead man*, all the *Angels of Heaven* cannot help him; if there were a thousand *Christs*, he should perish without them; and why wilt thou not despaire in thy selfe? Despaire? God forbid. I'll never despaire while I live, God is more merciful then so, and I hope I need not despaire. *Christ died for sinners, and I were a foole if I should despaire.* Thus thou pleadest with God for thy vaine hopes; but why wilt thou? sayes God, why wilt thou plead with mee? thou hast transgressed against me, *Jer. 2. 29.* Thou pleadest for hopes, and liest in thy sins, why wilt thou? marke, the will is set on it, thou wilt plead: *thou mightst despaire of thy selfe, but thou wilt not*, and therefore thou wilt wilfully perish.

Thirdly, but I cannot pull downe mine owne heart, nor master mine owne will sayest thou; No? Why then canst thou not goe and resigne it to God? Lord, here is a proud heart, I cannot humble it; Oh, here is a stony heart, I cannot breake it: Lord doe thou; here is a rebellious heart, I cannot subdue it: Lord doe thou:

*Repugnan-
ti non vo-
lenti neces-
sitas est.
Sen.*

thou ; but thou wilt not resigne up thy heart, thou wilt not set about it as well as thou canst; they will not frame their doings to turne unto God, Hos. 5.4. they will not ; so thou wilt not frame thy self to do it as wel as thou canst. And therefore thou dost willingly goe on , and thou art wholly inexcusable before God ; and when he sends thee to Hell, thou shalt know thine owne will brought thee thither. Thou mightst reforme thine outward man, but thou wilt not ; thou mightst bridle thy lusts and thy passions , but thou wilt not ; thou mightst take a thousand good opportunities , but thou wilt not. And therefore thou hast no excuse before God, thou dost willingly perish. Its true thou canst not, may be, but necessity is not it, but thou wilt not : indeed if thou didst every day labour to fight against thy lusts , and resist to the utmost , and couldst not, then it were necessity, but thou dost not, nay thou wilt not. Hee that resisteth and then cannot, he may plead, Lord, what a woful necessity of sinning am I in : but thou givest way to thy lusts, and therefore thou art inexcusable, and thou dost willingly perish.

The second Gronnd.

THe second now follows. Every wicked man is slothfull and negligent. Thou evill servant and slothfull, sayes Christ , Matth. 25.26. Thou hast beene lazie with the Talent I gave thee. I gave thee preaching and teaching , and thou hast beene lazie to heare it. I have given thee

thee knowledge of that which is good, and thou hast bene lazie to improve it. I have pulled thee to Prayer by the motion of my Spirit, and thou hast bene lazie at the duty: Thou cvill and slothfull servant, I have given thee many a sweet opportunity to be rid of that base lust that thou art most addicted unto, and thou hast bene lazie to take it. This is another ground of this Doctrine. Now if this be so, thou must lay the blame on thine own will, and not on Gods denying thee power; Because sloth is a fault of the will. I cannot call him a sluggard, that flickes at a cannot, but onely him that flickes at a will not. Hee that labours and strives as much as hee can, none will call him a sluggard, but him that can labour more and will not. Sloth is a voluntary fault of the will: How long wilt thou sleepe O sluggard? Prov. 6.9. How long wilt thou? its not a fault of impotency, but of will.

Five Demonstrations to prove this.

First, if thou bee slothfull to good duties, then thou dost onely imagine a company of cannots. I cannot doe as I would sayst thou: No, why then art thou slothfull, to make more imaginary cannots? A slothfull man imagines more cannots then there be. I cannot go this journey saies hee, I shall be weary, I shall be reb'd, I shall fall off my horse; I cannot travell it: the way of a slothfull man is a hedge of Thornes. But the way of the righteous is made plaine saies Solomon. The slothfull man he imagines there's a thorn hedge in his way. I shal be prickt

1 Demon.

Prov. 15.
19.

prickt, J cannot get over it; what? is there a Thorne hedge in the way? No; for the righteous that goes it, he finds it plaine, hee sees none; no; there is no such Thorne-hedg in the way, but he does imagine one; and therefore *his will not is his let, not his cannot, for hee does but imagine a cannot*. So doest thou say, I cannot do thus and thus; why then art thou slothfull to imagine more cannots, and Thorne hedges then there are? J cannot live then. Oh J cannot go so often to Prayer, and if I should do so as you say, J should be houted at up and downe; you tell me I am a Hellhound for my pride and my passions; Oh if I should believe this, I should never have merry day more. Alas all these are *but imaginary cannots, imaginary Thorne-hedges*. I cannot be so strict, neither can I put it up. I say thou dost but imagine a company of cannots, and therefore *thou wilt not*.

2 Demon

2. Demonstration. *If thou bee slothfull to good duties, then thou makest every little difficulty a cannot; nothing but an impossibility is a cannot*. But if thou beest slothfull, thou makest every little difficulty a cannot. I cannot turn mine owne heart, nor break mine own heart: but why then art thou slothfull, to make every little difficulty a cannot? a slothfull man makes every little difficulty a cannot. *The slothfull man will not plow by reason of cold, and therefore shall bee beg in harvest and have nothing*. He will not plough by reason of cold, hee sticks at a very little difficulty, his fingers are so tender forsooth, they must not ake, *his Toes*

Toes are so Lady-like they must not smart, because its a little difficult, therefore hee will not doe it; He will not plow by reason of cold. Well, beg then and yee will; cannot you endure a little cold? yea, he could endure it, but it would be difficult. And therefore sayes the Text, hee will not plough by reason of cold. *Hee does noe sick at an impossibility, for then indeed hee could not.* But the slothfull man will not plough by reason of cold: Hee sticks onely at a difficulty, and therefore hee will not; nay if hee should labour soundly indeed, his very labour would keepe him from being a-cold; the truth is, its the *labour of ploughing that hee is against.* And therefore every little cold shall serve for an excuse; So why art thou slothfull to count every petty difficulty a cannot? Its an uncomfortable thing to bee alwayes poring on my finnes, I cannot abide it, its troublesome to be Tongue-tied. What not speake a word but onely with warrant from Scripture? I cannot abide it; what never helpe my selfe at a dead lift by telling a lye? never right my selfe by a little revenge? never comply nor sort with such and such old acquaintance, because they drop out an Oath now and then before they are aware? O. I cannot abide it. What thus precise? I am not able to abide it. No? *cannot, cannot thy stubborne will stoop to a little difficulty?* get thee to Hell, and see if thou canst abide that, and there thanke thine owne will for thy perishing.

J. Demonstration, if thou beest slothfull, ^{3.} Demon.
E then

Eccles. 10.
18.

then thou turnest thy very abilities into cannots, not onely all difficulties, but also thine abilities into cannots. Like a drone that is lazy, hee loses his abilities that hee hath. By much slothfulnesse the building decayeth. Alas I am very dead-hearted, sayst thou; nay, but O man, the time was when God quickened thee at a Sermon, why didst thou let it decay? the time was when thou wert a little well affected, why didst thou let it decay? time was when thou wert soberer, and lesse given to wrath and passions, and why didst thou let these good conditions decay? the Lord gave thee them heretofore, and thou hast played the sluggard with them, and therefore now they are decayed. Thy quickening is decayed, thy sorrows for sinne decayed, thy meltings decayed, through much slothfulnesse the building does decay. Hee that is slothfull in his worke, is brother to a great waster: So thou art a brother to a great waster, because thou art slothfull.

Pro. 1. 8. 6.

4. Demon. 4. Demonstration. If thou beest slothfull, then thou dost voluntarily naile thy selfe unto cannots. There is many a sinne that now thou art a slave to, that thou mightst have troden under thy foot, but now thou canst not; thou mightst have gone further and further on in reformation, if thou hadst held on when thou wert going; like a Coach, its easier to make it runne on when once its going, then stir it, when once it stands still; and now thou canst nor, now thou art nayled to it, like the doore to his hinges. Now thou canst pray and pray

pray and grow ne're the better ; hear and read and ne're the holier : *As the doore turneth upon its hinges , so doth the slothfull man on his Bed.* The doore goes to and fro ; to it goes, and fro it goes, it goes may be all the yeare long , and still it hangs just upon the same hinges , and after seven yeares travell, it hangs there where it did ; its nayled to its hinges. So its with a sluggish heart, hee goes to a Prayer and from a Prayer, to a Sermon and from a Sermon, to a good duty and from a good duty ; and still he hangs just on the same hinges He hath gotten no ground, is just where he was ; so thou art just at the same passe, after a thousand prayers and a thousand Sermons, and millions of good duties , still thou hangest on thy old duties, ne're the more pure to this houre.

Pro. 19. 24



5. Demonstration , *Sloth is a lazy putting forth by halfe of that power one hath.* 5. Demon. This also is the very nature of Sloth ; when a man hath more power then hee shews, but hee is lazy to put it all forth. The Scripture uses a comparison of a man that hides his hand in his bosome , and though hee have meat standing before him, yet hee will not so much as bring it to his mouth. A slothfull man hideth his hand in his bosome, and will not bring it to his mouth. What ? why does he starve ? because hee hath not any meate ? No, the meate standeth before him : because hee hath not any hands ? No , hee hath a hand in his bosome : because his hand hath the dead fallie, and hee not able to stirre it ? No , hee

Prov. 19. 24.

will not put it forth. *Hee will not bring it to his mouth*, sayes the Text : So when thou art *Praying*, thou wilt not put thy selfe forth; when thou art *reforming*, thou dost not put thy selfe forth; when thou art about any good service, thou dost not put thy selfe forth; here is a *Sabbath* before thee, and a *Sacrament* before thee, but thou wilt not reach it to thy mouth; thou wilt not put thy selfe forth. *The Lord tells thee this sinne will breake thy necke*, and thou wilt not so much as reach it to thy mouth, nor apply it to thy heart; may be it would humble thee, and feed thee, but thou wilt not reach it to thy mouth; what a deale of power hast thou? but thou puttst it forth *by the halves*, when thou art examining thy conscience, thou puttst thy selfe forth by the halves, thou mightst put thy selfe forth many degrees more, but thou wilt not.

Oh beloved, this same point will strike the *World dumbe before God*, even this, *why did yee not put your selves forth to the utmost?* Thou hast somewhat more in thee then by reason of thy lazinesse thou dost put forth.

Six Arguments to
prove it.
1. Argu-

*There is more then by reason of Sluggishnesse
thou putttest forth.*

First, its a signe it is in thee, because when God does convert a sinner, he does not put in new powers and faculties into the soule; he does not put in a new faculty of thinking and understanding, and willing, and affecting, and remembring; No, the soule hath these faculties already, understanding already, and thinking already, and remembring and desiring already, and willing already,

the grossest Self-murder.

41

already ; but God does not put in new faculties, but turnes them that are there unto himselfe like a Watch out of frame, the wheelles are there still, the spring still, and every parcell there still, but all out of frame, and the artist sets them in frame; so the Soule hath them in it ; True it requires the *omnipotent power of God to turne all these faculties to him.* Notwithstanding thou dost *voluntarily turne them unto other things, and not unto God.* They are every one in thee, as thou art a man. But God may not have them, nay and thou mightest put them forth to more then thou dost. Other things can have them *superfluously*, but God may not have them. (*Intend not a power of doing the least good in a gracious manner, nor to engage God to give thee grace only.*)

When God comes to work grace, he findes in thee indeed *passiva capacitas, & potentia obedientialis*, but their own natural faculties are raised to supernatural acts upon supernatural object God.
2. Argu.

Secondly, its a signe it is in thee. (I meane still so farre forth as to demonstrate thee slothful.) I say its a signe it is in thee, because thou canst *shew as great power otherwise*: When a servant can runne a race for his sport, why will he not on his Masters errand when hee bids him? Its a signe it is in him, and hee will not put it forth. Canst thou not spare an houre every day for private Prayers unto God, sometime for to meditate and belabour thy heart? Thou canst spare twice as much for thy belly and thy backe, and thy profits. Canst thou not shed teares for thy sinnes? Thou canst shed teares for madnesse, and wrath, and vexation. Canst thou not tell how to glorifie God? Oh my parts are very shallow, gifts very small, &c. but thou art wise to do evill, They

are

are wise to doe evil, but to doe good they have no knowledge. Its a signe it is in thee, but thou wilt not. Jer. 4. 21. Thou canst not speak for God, thou canst not be angry against sinne, nor lay to heart the miseries of Gods Church? No? but thou canst finde thy Tongue fast enough for to raile, and clamour; and thou canst even burst with anger when thou art crest. Its a signe its in thee, a signe there is wit enough in thee, and ability enough in thee to take paynes. Thou hast it for other things, but thou wilt not put it forth for the Lord. Oh how does this provoke the most high! That strangers should devour all thy strength. Like Ephraim, strangers devoured all his strength. God might have none of it, but strangers and strange lusts could have it: The World can have thy paines and thy cares; the things of the World they can have thy thoughts and thy strength, and not I, sayes Christ. As a Master complaines of his refractory servant, you can doe it for your self, and doe it for others; but you will not do it for me; a signe it is in thee, but thou wilt not put it forth.

En
3. Argu. Thirdly, a signe it is in thee, for thou canst shew it to whom thou listest; like a sluggard that will worke at idle times; so thou canst serve God when thou hast nothing else to do. Like Pharaohs conceit of the Israelites, That they would serve God because they had nothing else to doe. Ye are idle, idle yee are, therefore ye say, Let us goe and doe sacrifice unto God. Because they had nothing else to doe; So when thou hast nothing else to doe with thy Tongue, thou

thou canst give it to God ; nothing else to doe wito thy thoughts , then thou canst *thinke* of God ; when thou hast no use of a lye, then thou canst tell truth , &c. a signe it is in thee ; it is not the telling of the truth ; it is not the speaking very gently and modestly that is not in thee to doe, but thou wilt not put it forth ; nay thou canst be soundly provoked while some are in company , and yet still as quiet as may be, a signe it is in thee.

Fourthly , a *signe it is in thee , but thou art so sluggish thou wilt not put it forth , because the rod is able to whip it out of thee*, Like a Boy that is idle and can say nothing , yet his Master is able to whip it out of him , then hee can say it very roundly. So thou canst not thinke of these things , yet let God lash thee, and whip thee with *sicknesse* , or with the *pangs of death*, Then O I have beene a Drunkard , and I have beene naught , I have beene wicked , and Oh if God would recover mee, I would not for a world sinne so as I have done : Then thou canst weepe, and then thou canst cry, and then *O for the Minister !* A signe it is in thee , for a rod puts in no new, but onely lashes up that which lay there ; as the *Twigges* of the rod have no *vertue* in them to put *learning* into the Boy , but its a signe it was in him. Ah thou wretch thou , thy blood lies on thine owne head ; why then dost thou not now put thy selfe forth ? Thou canst , but Oh it kills thee to thinke now of taking paines after such things. It kills thee now to goe to thy beads and lie at weeping crosse , and bee so holy
for-

Pro. 21. 25

forsooth. Oh it kills thee now to take paines hereabouts, like the sluggard, *the desire of the sluggard kills him, for his hands refuse to labour.* He desires to have a crop but it kills him to go to the Plough; he desires to have his markets, but it kills him to go thither. So thou desirest, to go to Heaven, but it kills thee to take paines; Mortification, Selfe-Deniall, Repentance, Humiliation, Examination of Conscience, Reformation of life; Oh these kill thee to think of them. A signe much is in thee; but it killes thee to put it forth.

3. Argu.

Fifthly, A signe it is in thee, because thou canst do a hundred time more then when thou art pleased; like a wilful lazy servant, you could do it better if you were pleased, saies his Master. So as long as thou art pleased thou canst be more religious, a signe it is in thee. Rehoboam, his first yeares were religious; Peter Martyr observes, hee was well pleased that same while he saw it was for the establishing of his kingdome. And the Levites came to him, from Jereboam, so long hee was pleased, and then hee was religious, but afterwards not; and why not afterwards too? Its a signe it was in him, but hee was not well pleased; So Joash did right in the sight of the Lord all the dayes of Jehoiada. Why? then hee was well pleased with Religion, for it helpt him to root out Athaliahs faction, Jehoiada had becne the saviour of his life, the helpe of him to the Kingdome, the Lord protector of his Nonage, the establissher of his Scepter. All this while Religion

Jehoiada

2 Kings
12. 2.

gion

gion did please him, but afterwards he *would not do right in the sight of the Lord.* Why? because other things now pleased him better; but its a signe it was in him. They on the rock, they could heare, and professe as long as the Gospel did please them, they heard it with joy, that pleased them well. Ye know Luke 4.13 joy is a very pleasing thing, and then they could be forward to professe it. A signe it was in them, but in time of *affliction and persecution*, nay now the Gospel did not please them, and therefore they *fall off*. So thou canst love a child of God as long as he pleaseth thee, nay thou canst commend him for his holiness; O its a credit to thee to be acquainted with such a one. But when some thing does not *please thee*, then thou canst hate him in thy heart; all these are signes it is in thee, but thou wilt not put it forth.

6: Argu.

Sixthly, a signe it is in thee, because thou wilt shew it in Hell; there Dives shall shew it was in him to have regarded a godly poore Lazarus, to have respected the salvation of his five brethren; there he shall shew it was in him to feare Hell more then he did. Then the wicked shall say; Luke 16. What hath pride profited us? And what have riches and meanes advantaged us? Then they shall see it was in them not to count them for hypocrites, and Fooles and mad Men that were more religious then themselves. Wee fooles counted their life madnesse, and wee had them in derision; & lo they are received amongst the Saints, *Wisd. 5.3, 4, 5.* And therefore it is in thee, why then wilt thou not put thy selfe forth?

forth ? I say this will strike you all dumb before God at the last day ; why would you not put your selves forth ? and how doe you *stand lazing and idleing out the dayes of your owne peace !*

No excuse
will serve
impeni-
tent sin-
ners turne
at the last
day.

Yee cannot have any one excuse.

First, Yee cannot say *no body hired you* : Indeed the carefulllest servant in the World must of necessity be idle when none will employ him ; why stand you here *idle all the day long* ? No man hath hired us Lord , *Matth. 20. 6.* Marke, they have an excuse that they were never hired into *the Vineyard*. That was more necessary idlenesse ; but you have beene hired, nay you were *hired very early in the morning*, and therefore why stand you here idle all the day long ?

Prov. 18.
23.

Secondly, Now thou art in Gods Vineyard, thou canst not say *I cannot professe*, I cannot profit by hearing, nor profit by praying, &c. Thou canst not say so ; for why dost thou not labour ? in all labour there is profit. Never ~~did~~ a man labour but some profit or other hee did get ; but thou wouldst not labour, but thou stoodest lazing and idleing. Faine wouldst thou bee saved ; faine escape Hell and damnation, and oh that this were to labour for it ! Like the slugaard that desireth a Harvett, and yet is idle ; *O utinam hoc esset laborare* : Hee lies loytering and playing, and oh that this were to labour ! Oh that this were to plough and to sow ! If his Bed were the Plough, and his Pillow the Teedle,

hee would then drive it well: So dost thou
utinam hoc esset resipiscere, thou goest on mind-
 ing the things of this life, carking and caring
 &c. *Vtinam hoc esset resipiscere*. O that this
 were to repent, and this were to go to Heaven:
 thou art negligent of prayer, and Faith, and
 Holinesse, *Christ Jesus save me*; Thus cryes
 the Drunkard, *Christ save mee*, and thus the
 Worldling, *Christ Jesus forgive mee*. Thus like
 a sluggard thou wishest; O that this were be-
 lieving and serving of God! Like the slugard
 I say, O that this were to labour! thou mightst
 profit if thou wouldst labour; *in all labour is*
profit; but thou wilt not labour, and there-
 fore inexcusable. O what a speechlesse crea-
 ture shalt thou be before God at the last day!
 This is the second ground of the Doctrine; The
 reason why a wicked man does not turne un-
 to God, is not because hee cannot, but because
 he will not. I say the ground of it is
 this;

*Every wicked man is slothfull and
 negligent.*

Stirre up yourselves yee whose heart the
 Lord hath awakened; Though the *wicked be*
 slothfull, *will yee bee slothfull also*? O what
 infinite reason hath the Lord to correct us,
 every one of us all? *How wofully slothfull are*
our hearts! I cannot master my unruly heart,
 sayes one, and I cannot cast out this same hard-
 hearted *Devill*: Thus wee say like the Dis-
 ciples of *Christ*, wee could not cast him out. O
 speechlesse Generation, how long shall I bee
 with

Mat. 9. 19.

with you saies Christ. Cannot cast him out? Why? he could goe out by *Preaching and Fasting*; So these same distempers of heart, these frozen hearted Devils would goe out soone enough by *Fasting and Praying*; But oh we are so lazy thereat, and so cold and so dead and so drowfie, wee do not take paines. There is teaching in abundance; and why cannot ye learne? There is misery enough on the Church, and why cannot we mourne? There is woe enough a comming, and why cannot wee provide for't afore-hand? God will whip out these lazy weeds out of us, if wee belong to him; O it provokes him! as Vineger to the Teeth, and smoake to the Eyes, so is the sluggard to him that sends him. Ah thou lazy drone; this 'tis to send a leaden-heeld drone of ones errand; it makes the Master looke as sowerly on him, as if he had drunken a Porringer of Vineger. So beloved, this our sloth to good things it doth deeply provoke God; there is many a mercy we lose, because of our sloth; many a grace wee never ataine, nay many a crosse and many a trouble do we get by reason of our sloth. Oh let us stirre up our selves, and blow up the sparkes that are under the embers, or else it will be evil and bitter, that God will make us to suffer. And you that live in your sinnes, let me tel you; yee can never looke for mercy except ye shake off your sloth; ye may desire to be converted, and pardoned, and saved, and so forth; but the soul of the sluggard desireth and hath not. But the diligent shall be made fat. 'Tis the diligent, the diligent only

Prov. 10.
26.

onely that shall be fatted with grace ; but yee may desire all dayes of your lifes but yee shal never have grace, except yce take paines. Nay, your owne raines shall torment you in Hell; Oh how did J idle out my time , and let slip occasions; and J could die, and J would to hel, and J would not doe otherwise, and woe is me that ever I was born,&c.

The third Ground.

A wicked man wil not set himself to use all the means that he may.

HE is not onely sloathfull in the use of the same, not onely he wil not doe as much good as hee may, but also hee will not so much as use the meanes constantly in any fashion. J cannot saith hee repent, nor be such a new creature as you talke of; Why then wilt thou not use the meanes? This makes thee inexcusable. All the whole World both godly and ungodly have a cannot; indeed the ungodly their cannot is larger and begins sooner, but the godly their cannot is much lessened; and beginnes further of. The Lord inables them to go further then all the wicked of the World; but beyond that, there beginnes their cannot. J say all the whole World have their cannot; J call that the meanes of grace, which is between their can and their cannot. As Prayers and hearing the Word, and studying, and meditating,

*Liberum
arbitrium
iboratum.*

Col.4.6.

tating, &c. The Lord seeing all men in their *cannots*, hath appointed such meanes as they *can*, whereby they are to seek unto God to doe that which they *cannot*. Now a childe of God whose *cannot* is in some measure healed by grace, he can pray in faith, and heare in faith, &c. And therefore Prayer in faith, hearing Gods Words in faith, &c. are his means to get more: he cannot obey more, nor believe more, but he uses these meanes that he may. But a wicked man, his *cannot* is larger, he cannot pray in faith, and doe these in faith, and therefore the faithfull doing of these duties are not his meanes. I cannot doe so, saies he: No, but thou mayst set upon them all, and doe them in as good manner as thou canst, that is thy means. Though thou canst not pray in faith, yet thou canst set up constant prayer in thy family though, such as they are: Thou canst not conferre with grace, but thou canst conferre about grace every day: thou canst not repeat the Word to thy household in faith, but thou canst repeat it in as good a manner as thou art able, that is thy means. Now, if thou wilt not use the meanes, thou stickest at a *will not*, and when thou dost perish, thou must thank thine own will, thou stickst at a *will not*. The first question Christ asks thee is this, what canst thou doe? As when the sonnes of Zebedee beg'd to sit one on the right hand, and the other on the left, this they could not, except God did vouchsafe them a new gift. But what can ye doe? sayes Christ, *are ye able to drink of the Cup that I am to drink off, and be baptized with the Baptisme*

Baptisme that I am baptized with? We are able, say they, *Matth. 20.22,23. Ye shall drinke, &c.* Mark, hee puts them to doe that which they can, and then bids them leave that which they cannot unto God. I say, the first question Christ askes thee is, what canst thou doe? I cannot be a Saint, Lord help thee to mercy, &c. Yea, but what canst thou doe? Canst thou not use these and these means I appoint thee? If thou wilt not doe them, neither will I helpe thee. This is the nature of means, to be a means to that which one cannot. A child of God can pray in faith, but he cannot master such a lust, and therefore he prayeth in faith that he may. He can heare the Word preached in faith, but he cannot get his heart to it as he would, and therefore he heareth in faith that he may. Doing these in faith are the meanes; now this is not the means of the wicked, for they cannot doe any thing in faith; but their meanes is to set about them at least that they may. I cannot pray in faith, sayest thou, yea: but thou canst set up constant Prayers in thy Family though, such as they are: thou canst not cast off thy sinnes in faith, thou mayst cast them off though; a godly man may doe these things in faith, and therefore that is his means. But that which is *Note.* his can is thy cannot; and that which is his meanes, thou must use means unto. Thou must pray that thou mayst pray in faith, repeat the Word, that thou mayst repeat it in faith: reforme thy life, that thou mayst reform it in faith; and seek the Lord, that thou mayst seek him in faith. Now, if thou wilt not set upon the

This con-
founds
the Hele-
na of the
Armini-
ans.

the means thou stickst at a will not; I confesse here is the difference, *the godly have a promise upon their using of their means, they using them in faith: but thou hast no promise, yet who knowes what God may doe?* As the King of Nineveh said, Let's cry mightily to God; let's cast away these and these sinnes, *who knows if God will turn and repent?* Jon. 3.9. he had no promise, he could not tell whether God would forgive. He would set upon the means, he would cry mightily, and it hit wel, for God spared the City: if thou wilt not set upon the means, thou doest wilfully perish; and here I cleared two things: 1 That God appoints every man the means that he may use, he may use those means that God commands him as means. 2 That if he wil not, he does wilfully perish.

*Arguments to prove a wicked man may use
the means that God appointeth
as means.*

I cannot heare the preaching of the Word, saiest thou, I am deafe, I cannot heare Sermons, then that is not thy means: reading, which thou canst; and meditating, which thou canst, is thy means. Every man may use the means that God does appoint him as means.

1. *Argu.*

Media.

First, because its the very nature of means to come between ones *can* and his *cannot*, and therefore they are called *media*, because they come in the midst between a mans can and his cannot. By what means may I goe up to *Lod-*
don

don? flying in the Ayre is not any means. No, that is a *Birds* means and not *mine*, for I cannot doe it; but my means is going, if I have legs: or riding if they be not able: or carrying if I cannot ride. Every mans *mediums* come in between that which he *can* and that which he *cannot*, and he is to use them that, that which he cannot he may be enabled to doe.

Secondly, because God does not *exhort men* like a company of stocks and stones, but as *men* that are *edifiable* by his words. If there were no means they could possibly use, they were like stocks and stones. If they had no eares as means to let it in, no understanding as means to conceive it: no power of willing at least to set about it, then we should preach to a company of stocks. There must be some *means* propounded, that men are enabled to use (though by any power of their own they cannot doe it graciously) or else as good preach to a company of stockes. Now God protests he draws men as men may be drawn: *I draw them with cords of a man.* Hos. 11.4. That is, with such cords as a man may be drawn with: not like a company of stocks and of stones: if ye have but the carnal reason of a man, these cords they would draw you. God draws you like men, with cords of a man: indeed in the quickning of the heart, and in point of repentance, a man is no more active then a stone. But when he draws you to the means, he draws you like men, and therefore ye may come if ye will, and if ye be but men, these cords are cords to draw men.

no understanding
no power

3. *Argu.*

Thirdly, because Gods anger is very reasonable; when a Master is angry with a servant, that may doe a thing and yet will not, we call his anger a very reasonable anger. I know Gods anger is very reasonable, for things which thou canst not; because once he gave thee power; but when he commendeth the meanes, now this anger is very reasonable. We our own selves count his anger very reasonable in the like case; what will he not doe it? No not use the meanes for to doe it? Would not this anger any body? Say we so, for these things sake *comes the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Eph. 5.6.* That is for Adultery, for Fornication, for vain words, and vain hopes to be saved; for these things comes the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. He does not say for not being renewed, for not being converted, but for these things comes the wrath of God forth. He's angry for that, but his wrath comes generally forth upon men for these things, because they will not use the meanes; They will not give over those sins which are the hinderances to conversion. This is very reasonable; if a man were not able to doe it, there would be some shew at least of unreasonablenesse in Gods anger; but there is not any shew of unreasonableness in his anger, when men will not buckle to the means which they may. When God commanded the *Egyptians* to submit and be humbled, they would not; he commanded them at least to use the meanes to let his people goe, and they would not. You shall see how the Text sayes his anger now was

very reasonable: there is a sweet phrase, *Psal.*
78.50. He made a way to his anger: in the He-
 brew tis he weighed a path to his anger. He
 weighed it in a ballance: mark how reasonably
 and proportionably God is angry. He puts his
 anger and mens sins in a ballance, and weighs
 out the right measure of anger. When a ser-
 vant forceth a master to be angry whether he
 will or no, he cannot complaine his Masters
 anger is unreasonable; he may goe of his er-
 rands and he wil not, he may doe this busines,
 and he will not: if he cannot doe the busines
 it selfe, yet he may use the meanes, and will
 not. Now his Masters anger is very reasonable,
 because he forceth him to be angry: as the
 churning of Milk bringeth forth Butter, so the
 forcing of wrath, bringeth forth strife. *Prov.30.*
33. He does even charme his Masters passions,
 and he forceth the same, as a churner for-
 cing the Milk to become Butter, so he forces
 ones kindnesse to become anger; and there-
 fore the anger is very reasonable. So God
 is very reasonable in his anger: wilt thou not
 use the means to be quickned? Suppose thou
 canst not quicken thy selfe, but wilt thou not
 see about the meanes? This churneth the
 Lords anger, and his anger is very reason-
 able.

*He made a way
to his anger
He weighed a
path to his
anger*

is very rea

Fourthly, Gods offer of his Kingdom to the
 wicked is serious: if they were sencelesse and
 quite dead, and could doe nothing, his offer
 were not serious: should a man offer an hun-
 dred pound to a dead carcase, here is an hun-
 dred pound for you, if you'l take it, ile give it

4th Argu.

This offer were not serious, because the dead carcassee is not able to stirre, but is sencelesse. True, in matter of conversion it selfe, a man is as dead as a carcassee. Nevertheless he is not absolutely a dead carcassee to all use of the means; he hath the life of nature, and reason, and of sence, and therefore when God offers his Kingdome in the meanes, this offer is serious. Turne you at my reproofe, behold I will poure out my spirit unto you, Prov. 1. 23. Hee speakes there even of Reprobates and all, and hee seriously offers them his spirit, and therefore they might have gone about the means, but they would not; *vocatio dei est seria*, as our Divines do all say, and therefore the means hee appointeth may be used.

5. *Argu.* Fifthly, because Gods reproofes are very equal; should a man reprove a cripple for not running, this reproofe were not equal, because hee is not able to do it. I grant when Gods reprooves the wicked for being sinful, such reproofes are all equall: though they be not able to be without sinne: but then equallity is grounded upon something before, namely upon their voluntary apostacy and inability in Adam. But when God reproves them for not setting about the means, his reproofes then are very equal, and the equality is grounded upon their wilfulnesse present; will ye not feare me? sayes God; I doe this and this; marke his reproofe is very equall. God reproves Israel for not observing his Statutes, saying the Statutes of Omri are kept. ~~Mat. 6. 16.~~ You can observe his statutes, why cannot you set about mine? hee

the statutes of omri are sets kept

sets up a Temple, you can goe constantly to it, why cannot you goe constantly to mine? The *mine* reproofe was very equall. If thou wilt not set upon the means, thou art most equally condemned. J cannot Preach so often as some doe, nor be so much resident as some are. No? Why wilt thou not give over one of thy two livings then? Thou art able to doe that; if thou'lt not set upon the means, thy condemnation is equall. Thus J have confirmed this first Point, namely, that the wicked *may use those means that the Lord commands them as means.*

In the second place J shewed that this being thus, *thy condemnation must be wilful if thou wilt not use all the means.*

Arguments to prove it.

First, *The Lord will not helpe that man by a* 1. *Argu.*
miracle to goe that hath legges to goe and will not;
Thou saiest thou wouldst faine goe to Heaven;
tell me what legges hath God given thee?
What meane hath he lent thee? If thou wilt
not use them, the Lord will never helpe thee
without. Had the Israelites had any means to
have gotten over *Jordan*, as Ships or Barkes,
Boates, or Bridges; or Fords, and they would
not, he would never have helpt them *over*
without. You know the Lord parted the waters,
Josh. 3. 13. but if they had refused the means,
hee would not have kept them on this man-
ner without: if they had *food sufficient in the*
Wildernesse to eat, and they would not, hee
would not have *rained food* downe upon them;
had

had they had Shoemakers and Drapers, and cloath sufficient to come by, and they would not, he would never have miraculously have helpt the garments from wearing. Its a tempting of God, when he thou hast means and wilt not be diligent in them, to desird God to helpe thee without; thou wouldst have thy children Gods children, thy family Christs family; then use the means. Set up the constant invocation of Gods Name, Morning and Evening among them; set up Readings, set up Catechising, and every good thing: or thou canst never expect it. Wouldst thou be holy, and heavenly? then use the means; Talk of Heavtn in thy meetings, reason about grace, inquire of good soules, and how may J come by an humble heart? How may J get faith, and be lead by the spirit? If thou wilt not be constat in the use of the means, all thy prayers to God are nothing but temptings. Thou art tr ubled with by-thoughts, thou sayst thou wouldst faine be deliverd there-from; then use the means, be not so long without God every houre, pray every day oftner, strive in the duty the harder; if thou wilt not use the means, God will never helpe thee without. Thou art full of thy doubtings, thou sayst thou heartily desirest to be freed; then use the means, or thou lyest: give over thy broad walking, thy broad acquaintance; those that have no more holinesse in them then the stock are thy bosomest friends; if thou wilt not use the means, God will never assure thee without, nor convert thee without; if *Dives* his five brethren will not heare

Moses and the Prophets, they shall have no miracle from the dead, *Luke 16, 18.* if God lend thee the means, hee will not save thee without:

Secondly, God will not bate a farthing of the price hee sets thee at; when a Tradesman hath once set his lowest price, hee will not goe lower. Now the use of the means, are Gods lowest price, the Lord will not bate a farthing of that; wherefore is a price put into the hand of a foole, *Pro. 17. 16.* the means of grace are this price, and the price is in thy hands, when the Lord vouchsafes thee the means, heele not bate thee a farthing of this price. He sets this price on his mercies and graces, thou must use all the means; not as though grace might be valued; no it exceedeth all prices, or as though grace were not free. Yea, its free and without price: its fit though that this price should be set upon the almes, that the proud beggar should choose to receive it; if thou wilt not give the price that God hath put into thy hand, thou art worthy to misse it; I will give so much, and labour so much, and pray so much, and reforme so much. No, no; that will not do, Christ will have tother odde penpy too, thy filthy speaking must off, and thy bale passions and old curses must off, heele have thee stoope to all his holy means; wouldst thou have it cheaper? Mine owne children and Saints never had it cheaper. Not *Abraham*, *Isaac*, nor *Jacob*, nor *Paul*; they were faine to use all holy means, to abandon every lust, to
• set up every duty, invocation in their families meditation

2. *Argu.*

meditation in their hearts, examination in their consciences, holy communication in their mouthes, none of my Saints had it cheaper, *and y^e makest a mock of the* And thou makest a mock of them for praying so much, and professing so much, so much hearing, and so much gadding after Sermons, &c. Well, well, i'le not bate thee one duty, nor one lust, nor one carnall desire, i'le have thee set about all, or thou shalt never have mercy. Yea but I cannot finde in my heart to put up this, nor to be abridged of this, and shall *Christ* and thou part for one *single farthing*? Perish then, and goe and thanke thine will for it in Hell. God is resolved upon this price, and this is the lowest.

3. Argu. Thirdly, *God will never be brought out of his walke*, thou canst never looke that God should come out of his walke to shew thee any mercy, or give thee any grace. Now the way wherein God walkes is the *means of grace and of salvation*; There thou must looke for God, or thou canst have no hope for to finde him. Suppose a poore petitioner should come wth his petition to the King; he can never looke to have the King come downe hither to Kochford to grant it him; No, he must goe up to the King. The King is at Court at *White-Hall*, and there he may have him; if he will not goe thither, he is wilful, and if his petition be not granted he may thanke his owne will. So thou canst not looke to fetch God out of his owne walke, the *means of grace and salvation*, endeavour to obey him, prayings, cryings, seekings, &c. These and other means of salvation are
hfs,

his walke, these are the waies wherein they must waite to finde God, if they would have him, *in the way of thy judgements have we waited for thee. Isa. 26.8.* There the Godly waite for the Lord, in the way where his walke is; *hee will not bee spoken with, but onely there in his walke.* If thou wilt not seeke him there, thou maist thanke thine own will, if thou missest him; yee that are negligent to hold out in Gods waies, yee can never looke to finde mercy while yee live. Pray for mercy, and cry for mercy, and grone for mercy, yee must looke to perish without it: if yee will not seeke it in his waies; you'l seeke him in some, but you will not seeke *him in all*, assure your selves then you shall *misse* of him, doe you thinke the King will come to you, to grant your petitions? you must goe up to him, and take him where hee is to be spoken with. *God will not be spoken with but onely in his waies; the Jewes received Sacraments enough, every meales meat is a new Sacrament in the Wildernesse, afterwards they prayed prayers enough, but I will not heare you, saies God; neere tell mee of your seeking for mercy, wash you, make you cleane, put away from you the evill of your doing. learne to doe well; come now and lets reason together, if your sins be as red as Scarlet, I'll whiten them.* Now heele be spoken with if you will come hither; What not erect his feare up in his family? not give over thy base carnall comforts? keepe such disorders under thy roofe? and in thy life sweare still? and *give place to the Devill still?* cursed passions *still?*
mock

mock at my children still? Dost thou walke in these waies and hope to find goo? No; as good cut of a doggs neck as give him sacrifice of prayers, as long as you walke in your own waies. *Esay 66.3.* you must seeke him in the waies that he walkes in, and not chuse your own waies, heele never come out of his way for any of you all; what shall I do Lord? saies *Saul* he would faine have spoken with God there. No, no; goe to *Ananias*, &c. if thou wilt not seeke him in his way, thou art well served if thou missest him.

I beseech you consider this point, you can never looke to be saved, except youle set your selves to do what you may, and use all those means that you may; for though the use of the means does not save you, yet they are the way; though not *causa regnandi*, yet *via regni*; and if you will not constantly use them, you can never have his Kingdome.

Reasons of it.

First, because Heaven is an end, and an end can never be gotten without means; the end is eternall life. *Rom. 6. 22.* eternal life is an end, and therefore except the means be all used, you can never attaine it.

Secondly, God hath annexed it to the means; all Heaven and Earth can never separate them; either use all the means that God hath appointed, or else he hath decreed it, ye shall never be saved. When he hath once appointed these and these shall be your means, these shall you use for't, ye shall never be saved without

without them. When God hath appointed their abiding in the ship a means of their escape, you shall see what *Paul* saies, *except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved Act. 27.* So tis for Heaven, except ye abide in the means, ye cannot be saved.

Thirdly, Every soul must give an account before God, how he hath used the means, Whether he hath used them all yea or ns. And according as the account is he can give, so shall his judgement be. God hath sworn this, as I live saith the Lord: God hath pawned his owne life upon this, that thus it shall be. As I live saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confesse to God: every one of us all shall give an accompt unto God, Rom. 14. 11, 12. every one of us, God will exempt none, we must all be brought to an accompt for these things: will not thy heart bow to it? As I live saith the Lord: I'll make every knee bow to it: I'll make you bow or I'll breake you for ever: as good do it as not, for ye shall give an accompt whether ye have done it or no.

Fourthly, beloved, God will not set up another doore into Heaven for any man in the World: either come in at this or you shall never come in. Heele never make another Bible: either be ruled by this or by none: Heele never chalke out another way, either goe this way or chuse, and perish in thy wilfulnesse. The drunkards way shall never be his way: the worldings way shall never be his, nor the lazy Gospellers his, nor the carelesse professors his, hee'll never change

changt waies, nor are *my waies your waies*, Eſay 55.8. you muſt amend your waies, *Ier.* 7.3. and come unto his way, or ye ſhal never eſcape the evil to come: can there be any reaſonabler way then this?

Prooſes.

Fiſt, Some of the meanes that God hath appointed you may do them without labour, you may doe them with eaſe: doe but ſay, I will, and it is done: What labour is it to ſay, company-keepers ſhal not ſit drinking in my houſe? There is never an Alehouſe in your Town, but if they wil, they may root out diſorders from their houſes: their own wils doe deſtroy them. Its no labour in the world to doe this, and wil ye not doe it? periſh then, and thank your own wils.

Secondly, ſome of the means that God hath appointed, are eaſier then them, ſonely that you would give way to another to doe them: may be the wife would have prayers in the family if the husband would give way. The *Minifter* would teach you, if you would give way: The Lord Jeſus might work many things in you, if you would give way: this is leſſe then to will. You that have good Wives, who would reform ſundry things, if you would give way, &c. I beſeech you apply it particularly to your ſelves, your ruin is wilful if ye yield not, and wil not give way,

Thirdly, Some of the means are yet eaſier, for ſome of the meanes of grace are better for you, even in your carnal and worldly reſpects. You ſay, that's the eaſieſt of all for a man to favour himſelf.

himselfe, and his flesh: As for example, the reforming of your gaming, dicing, carding in your Innes, your drunkenness and beeling o're the pot; your pride and your geygaws, and the like: would not this favour your purses, and be more agreeable to your very carnal respects? and therefore you that doe not reform these, you pluck wilfull perdition on your heads,

Fourthly, some of the means of grace, its harder to omit them then to use them: Many of you meet with more hardships in the omission then you could light upon in the practice of them: I need not instance the particulars, they are very familiar.

Fifthly, some of the meanes of grace, be they hard, yet they are but hard: they are not impossible for you to use. They wil ask no more then a little labour and diligence, and therefore omitted only by reason of *wil-nots*.

I hope by this time you see clearly the truth of this ground. If ye wil not set your selves to use the means of grace and salvation, when ye die you must needs lay the blame on your wils: And why wil ye so? *Why wil ye die, O house of Israel.*

But notwithstanding the evidence of this truth, *The wisdom of the flesh, which is enmity against God*, fills carnal minds with many objections against it: from all which I shall endeavour to vindicate it, by answering them all in order.

1 *Object.* **T**He first objection is drawn from those Scriptures which say they cannot.

2 *Object.* From their own willingnesse, they would, but they cannot.

3 *Object.* Is from their own desires, they desire to doe it, but they are not able.

4 *Object.* Is from their resolutions, they purpose, but whether they wil or no, they are feine to break their good purposes.

5 *Object.* Is from their good endeavours (as they say) they labour against their sins, and yet they are transported into them, to swear before they are aware, to be overtaken in company, &c. We will answer them in order.

1 *Object.* As to the first Objection from the Scriptures, answered which say they cannot, I answer :

There are
five cannots in
Scripture:
1 *Cannot*

Indeed the Scripture speaks of five cannots.

First, of a *naturall cannot* : every man is born by nature under a *cannot believe*, and a *cannot see God* : But there is difference between thy *cannot repent*, and thy *doest not repent* : there is difference betwixt these two. The cause of thy *cannot* is one thing, and the cause of thy *doest not* is another. The cause of thy *cannot* is the carnalnesse of nature: but the cause of thy *doest not*, is the wilfulnesse of thy wil. *The naturall man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishnesse to him : neither indeed can he, for they are spiritually discerned,*

1 Cor. 2. 14. Where the Apoſtle makes a different cauſe of a natural *mans cannot*, and his *does not*: when he ſpeakes of his *cannot*, he tells us the cauſe of that is becauſe grace is ſpiritual and he is carnal. Neither indeed *can be*, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned: but when he ſpeakes of his *does not*, you ſee he alledges a different cauſe of his *does not*. The natural man *does not* receive the things of the ſpirit of God, they are fooliſhneſſe unto him: He counts them all fooliſh: He is ſo *wilful* in his own carnal reaſon, that he counts it folly to deny it: thou canſt not do thus and thus doſt thou ſay? Why then wilt thou count it folly to do ſo? when a man croſſes thee of thy will, thou countſt it folly to put it up: I were a foole if I ſhould be ſo preciſe as ſome be: I were a foole if I ſhould not ſuffer a little diſorder in my houſe, as long as I gaine by it. This is meere *wilfulneſſe*: this, and not a *cannot*, is a cauſe of thy *doeſt not*. Thou canſt not indeed becauſe thou art carnal, but thy cannot is dead and not operative: thy will is the cauſe of thy *does not*, Like the *wilful blinde blinde man*, He was blinde and would not open his eye-lids. He could not ſee, but his *cannot lay dead*, for he would not open his eye-lids: his *cannot is not operative* till he will open his eye-lids. If he could ſee, yet he could not till he would open his eye-lids, ſo thou wilt not open thine eye-lids.

Secondly, the Scripture ſpeakes of a *deliberate cannot*, when a man cannot do a thing, *onely becauſe he cannot finde in his heart to do it*
 Thou

Thou canst not repent of this and that sinne and forsake it, the truth is, thy cannot is this, thou *canst not finde in thy heart to forgoe it*. Such a course is profitable and pleasing to thy flesh, thou canst not finde in thy heart to abandon it, thou canst not finde in thy heart to bee friends with such a one; to part with thy vanities, or to abridge thy selfe of thine angry speeches when thou art stird, &c. Thou canst not finde in thy heart to do it. As the *Jewes, you cannot believe*, saies Christ, because *ye seeke honour one of another*. *Joh. 5. 44.* they would faine bee well thought of, of all their acquaintancé, and therefore they could not *finde in their heart to believe in Christ*. Oh that would make thee to bee out of favour with the *Pharisees*, and to be counted basely of in the World. Therefore they could not finde in their heart to believe; now this is no excuse; thou canst not turne unto God, thou canst not finde in thy heart to part with thy lusts, this is thy cannot.

3 Cannot Thirdly, the Scripture speakes of a *judicial cannot*, as a rogue cannot goe, because for his *loytering the Magistrate hath lockt him in the stocks*; This does not excuse thee one jot, shall the villaine be wilful in his loytering, and then complaine of the Magistrate that hee is not able to goe about his worke? I cannot goe about my worke saies hee; and who bad him be so idle as not to goe about it, when hee might? Thou hast gone on may be wilfully in thy sinnes, and now the *Lord hath inflicted a judicial cannot* unto thee. Thou
canst

canst not come out of thy finnes, nay the Lord hath cast this *cannot* upon thee in judgement; he hath set thee in the stocks for thy wilful security. As the wicked *Jews*, they could not believe, saies the Text, because *Isaiah* saith, *He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts*, Joh. 12. 39, 40. could they excuse themselves for their cannot? No, the Lord had set them in the stocks for their wilfulnesse and security. They could not believe, for they had wilfully provoked the Lord to cast this cannot upon them in judgement.

Fourthly, the Scripture speakes of a com-^{4 Cannot}
pounded cannot. A cannot in *sensu composito*, as we call it; a cannot in a compounded sence. As a Drunkard cannot tender his family, his poore wife and children. No, as long as he lies blowing on the Ale-bench he cannot, in a compounded sence he cannot. *Aristotle* sets it out by sitting; he that is sitting cannot walk, that is, as long as he is sitting he cannot walk. As *Christ* saith of a carnal man, *he cannot be my Disciple*: hee cannot in a compounded sence, *He that commeth to me, and hates not father and mother, and wife, and children, yea and his own life, cannot be my Disciple*, Luke 14. 26. he cannot indeed as long as hee stands upon these terms; My father will not love me, and my mother will not like me, if I should be one of your Disciples; my friends would not owne me; I must doe as I doe, or I cannot keepe my wife and children. Indeed as long as thou standst on these termes thou canst not be a Disciple of Christ; thou canst not in a compoun-

Impossibile est sedentem ambulare.

ded sence; but if thou wouldst divide it thou mightst; *no man can serve two masters Math. 6. 4.* marke, compound them together, and he cannot. But if he would give over one, he might serve the other; thou canst not thou saiest. No; J yeeld thee in a compounded sence thou canst not, thou canst as long as thou art thus carelesse as thou art, as long as thou favourest thy selfe in such and such lusts, thou canst not. The compounding of thy security and laziness with Religion, that is the reason why thou canst not, this is it that makes our prayers hard, and our repentings hard, our believings and all our performances hard; because we would faine be compounding. We have much adoe to Pray, our hearts can hardly be brought to wrastle, much adoe to be humbled, our wils wil hardly stoope; if it were not for these compoundings these duties were easie. And what excuse hast thou hence? none at all: for its a canuoe onely in the compounded sence that thou makest it.

Note.

5. *Cannot* Fifthly, the Scripture speakes of a *humbling cannot*, a cannot not to bolster thee up in thy excuses, but only to humble thee, that thou maiest be driven out of thy selfe unto God. A servant cannot live except it be his Masters pleasure to take pittie on him; Is this any pretence to him to anger his Master? or to be negligent of his Masters commands? nay rather it forceth him to be so much the more careful to obey him, and to be humble before him. So the Scripture saies, that thou canst not without God, except God shew mercy on thee, to convert

vert thee and save thee, thou canst not be accepted of him. *All this is to humble thee, not to helpe thee with excuses.* Tush I cannot do as his Ministers do bid me, I cannot mortify these sins, I cannot be so strict, this is to much precisenesse you speake of. *O murmur not, this cannot is onely to humble thee; murmur not among your selves.* No man can come to me except the father draw him, *Job. 6. 43, 44.* This is no reason why thou shouldst murmur or cavill, or be stubborne as thou art, thou canst not come at Christ except the father take pittie on thee to draw thee. Thou hast so much the more reason to be humbled, and not to goe on wittingly and wilfully as thou doest. Canst thou not be holy, and saved, except he be pleased to pittie thee? in what a woeful case then art thou to provoke him as thou dost? So much shall suffice for thy first Objection, drawne out of the Scripture.

The second thing thou objectest, is thy willingness; thou wouldst as thou pretendest, but thou canst not.

I answer thee for this.

2 Object.

First, may be its the will of thy conscience, *answered* and not the will of thy heart; thy heart is carnall and unacquainted with God, and so its contented to be, onely thy conscience would have thee grow better and more heavenly; but thy heart will not yeeld; and therefore all thy willings are nothing but deludings; they are only the willings of conscience and not of thy heart. Thou art chafing and fretting every foot, thy conscience tells thee thou shouldst

not, thou art praying carnally every day; when thou hast done, conscience saies thou shouldst pray holier then so, *conscience would but thou wilt not*, conscience would have thee get assurance for Heaven, but thou wilt not be at the paines. Alas, this makes thee inexcusable, for now thou condemnest thy selfe, and yet wilt sinne; thou art inexcusable O man who-soever thou art that judgest, for *wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thy selfe*: Rom. 2.11. marke, when a man condemneth himselfe he is inexcusable. (I do not now quote it for the particular the Apostle does instance there for judging another,) for the truth is the same, whatsoever sinne we doe instance in, the truth is this that *Paul* grounds his speech on. Hee that condemneth himselfe in a sinne, and yet will go on in it; that man is inexcusable. What now hast thou gotten by thy plea? thou wouldst, thou saiest; this makes thy sinne to be worse in that thy contcience would, and yet for all that thou wilt not.

Note.

Secondly, may be its a copulative will; thou hast a will to repent and be godly, but it is with a complative will. Repentance and some lust, godlinessse and some lust; thou wouldst faine please the Lord and thine own lust too, be religious and proud too, believe in Christ and covet too, and be vaine too, &c. Thou hast a will but it is a copulative will, to serve God and do this too; Pish, cannot I serve God and do this too? No, no; this same copulative will is a flat contradiction. Couple light and darknesse? *Christ and Beliall* 2 Cor. 6. 15. Its a
con-

contradiction to imagin to couple them, for they candot possibly be coupled. And therefore this same copulative will is nothing but a mockery, and the truth still is this thou wilt not ?

Thirdly, May be thou hast a woulding wil, this is no will, but but onely a veleity; so thou hast a woulding will. I would do as well as any other, but I cannot; to speake properly this is no will, for its onely that will wherewith fooles will things impossible; I would I were at *London*, with a wish saies he; I would I could flie as well as an *Eagle*. These things are impossible, and therefore its no will, but meere folly; thus may be thou willest grace, I would with all my heart I could do as God saies, God knowes my heart, my will is good, I would be better then I am; And yet thy conscience can call for something or other to be mended, and thou wilt not. This is an impossibility, and therefore no will; like the foole that would sit in his chaire, I and would I were at *London*, he would faine be at *London* and sit still. So thou fittest at the same passe, I would I were in Christ; thou wouldst faine be in Christ, and yet thou art loth to stir out of that base temper thou art in. This is an impossibility, a folly and no will; woulding and no willing. I grant the Saints of God have their wouldings, and their would does go farther then their wil; their will is absolutely set to be holy, & they would be holy. Their wil is deeply to be humbled, and they would be deeper; their would is grounded on a wil, they wil in some measure & they

Note.

they would goe further. I will, oh that I could will more. But thou that liest in thy sinful estate, *thy would is pure folly*. A would, grounded upon a *will not*, is foppish; the *Saints would is grounded upon a will*; but *thine, the roote at bottome is this, thou wilt not*.

When
carnall
men can
discover
no other
blemish
in the
Saints,
then they
charge
them
with
hypocrisy

Fourthly, may be thou *hast a generall metaphysical will*, but to come to *particulars*, there *thou wilt not*. I hate the Saints of God? God forbid? I'll never hate them while I live; and yet come to this Saint and that Saint; *him thou wilt hate*; *him*? He is the veriest hypocrite in the Country, and keepes more adoe then needs. Thus thy will is good to a company of metaphysical Saints in the clouds; but those that are Gods *Saints in particular*, *thou mockest*. I be stubborne against the Commandements of God? I will not be stubborne against them; yea, but *this and that Commandement thou wilt not observe*. Thou wilt not thinke best of them of whome thou shouldst, nor take up that carriage in meetings that thou shouldst; thou hast a good will to the Commandements in affliction, but thy will stands against the particulars of them. Generals are but Notions, when they are abstracted from the particulars. And therefore thy will is but a Notion; the will when it willett indeed, willett particulars, this particular duty, this particular Ordinance. Indeed good, in the general is the object of the will, but when the will comes to will in the exercise of it, it pitcheth on particulars.

Fifthly, thou hast no true will, J speake still to the carnall, J say thou hast no true will,
because

because if thou truly didst will, thou couldst; if thou didst truly well to; believe, and will to be a new creature thou couldst; for the wil it hath *potentia executivam*, so farre as it will, &c. It hath an executing power to go so farre as it will; if thou didst truly and really will to speake holy, thy will would make thy tongue to put in execution. If thou hadst a wil, thy will would command execution, *my tongue shall speake the praise of the Lord*, saies David, *Psal. 119. 171, 172. my soule it shall praise thee, vers. 175.* J grant the woulding of the will goes further then all execution can goe, *to will is present with me, but how to performe that which is good, I find not*, *Rom. 7. 18.* J quote this place the rather, because many wrest it to their owne destruction. Oh saies a wicked man, J have a good will, J would as Paul saies, *but J cannot performe*, thus men mis-interpret this place; for looke how farre Paul would, he could performe, for the will hath *potentiam executricem* and an imparative force over the man. What hee did will, he did performe, he performed it in *his heart*, and *tongue*, and *hand*, &c. but he would draw his will forwarder then it was, but he could not, his very will was partly unwilling, he could not in deed performe so much as he would, that is, hee could not draw on his will so strongly as hee would. His will was not perfectly sanctified, no Saint in this World hath any perfect compleatnesse of will; and therefore his performance is not perfect, because his will is not perfect. J say if thy will be converted to God, thou thy selfe art converted

ted to God, obedience ever goes as farre as the wil. And therefore if thou art willing, its certain thou art obedient; if ye be willing and obedient, sayes the Text, *Iſa. 1. 19.* whoſoever is willing to obey, that man does obey in ſome meaſure, becauſe the will hath power of execution, and the whole man at command. This is the reaſon why *Divines* ſay, that the *sincerity of the wil is the condition of the Goſpel*; wherefore if thou beſt not obedient, neither art thou willing to obey; all the powers of thy ſoule, and all the members of thy body, thy wil hath an *aſſas imperativus* to command ehem. Now if thy will wil not command them to yield, thou art not ſo much as willing at all. If a Juſtice of peace ſhould tell me he would give me a warrant, and yet when all comes to all he wil not command his clerke to write it, nor his own hand for to pen it, I ſee plainly he wil not. Doſt thou ſay, I would obey Chriſt, and I would deny my ſelfe, why then doſt thou not command thy Clerke to write it? If thy wil wil not command tongue, Tongue thou ſhalt never talk ſo unprofitably as thou haſt done, and Eare thou ſhalt never hearken after vanity as thou haſt done; and thoughts, Thoughts ye ſhall never run at rovers as ye have done. If your wil were but willing it would command your whole ſoule, *Soule thou ſhalt not doe as thou haſt done*: as *Dauids* wil commanded his ſoule, *O my ſoule bleſſ the Lord, and forget thou not all his benefitts*, *Pſal. 103. 2.* Nay, he commanded all that was in him, *all that is in me bleſſe his holy Name*, *verſ. 1.* So if thou wert willing, thy will would

would command all thy foule; foule thou shalt not be so seldom at the throne of grace as thou art, &c. Thus much of the second objection drawn from the wil.

Objection the third.

But thou desirest to doe it, and therefore thou dost not stick at a wil not.

I answer thee, who can tell best what is in thee, God or thine own heart? verily the Lord that did make it is likeliest to know best. Now the Lord sayes peremptorily, thou desirest not grace; yea, and thy heart sayes so too, and the Lord heares it, though thou hearest it not; they said unto God depart from us, *we desire not the knowledge of thy waies, Job 21.14.* Neverthelesse, because thou standest so stoutly upon it, that thou dost desire grace, He tell thee the reason of thy mistake.

First, thou hast putative or thinking desires, thou thinkest thou desirest, and therefore thou art mistaken; like *Seneca's* young scholler, that said, he desired to be good. I do not say, saith he, he lies, but *putat se cupere*, He thinks that he desires; so thou sayest thou desirest. I wil not say thou lyest, but thou thinkest thou dost so; now alas thy thoughts are the vaineest things in the World. *How long shall vain thoughts lodge within thee? Jer. 4 14.* thy thoughts are very vaine, there is no trusting in them. *Naaman* thought, *I thought*, saith he, but how wide his thought was the story declares. *Haman* thought, *he thought in his heart*, sayes the Text; but

3 *Object.*
answered

2 King 5.
31.
Ester 6.6.

but these thoughts came to nothing but a Gallowse and a Halter. *Ishbibenos* thought, but you know what his thoughts did come unto; it fell fowle on his own head, nothing is more vain then the thoughts of carnall mens hearts; so thou *thinkest thou desirest*, alas thy thought is but vanity.

Secondly, thou hast *ignorant desires*, thou dost desire to be one of Gods Saints, thou desirest it ignorantly; for when thou comest to see who the Saints be, namely, such and such whom thou conceivest to be strange people and Puritans, then thou hast no desire to be one. Thou desirest to go *after Christ*, thou dost *ignorantly desire it*, for when thou seest thou *must take up his crosse*, then thou hast *no desire* thereunto; as the Prophet speakes of Christ in the person of the wicked, when we shall see him, there is no beauty that wee should desire him, *Esay 53. 2.* thou desirest with ignorant desires before thou seest who he is; but when thou seest who he is, thou dost not desire him. Thou desirest his grace, thou *desirest to believe and repent*, and to *put up injuries*, these are ignorant desires before thou seest what they be; but when thou seest what they be, what the *injury* is that thou shouldst put up, then thou dost not *desire to put it up*; what the *sinne* is that thou shouldst leave, then thou dost not *desire* for to leave it; when thou seest them, then thou dost not desire them. When we shall see him, there is no beaurty that we should desire him.

Thirdly, thou hast *wandering desires*. Oh
faich

saith one, you have a happy turne, you have good Preaching, and good means to be godly, and be edified. I desire to be so; but alas our Minister does not Preach, and we have a *dumbe dog*; and I am in a very wicked place, If I were as you are, I should count my selfe happy. God knowes, I desire heartily the edification of my soul; thus thy desires *wander after other mens cases; and thou wilt not stirre out for thine own*. How dost thou desire to be edified, when thou wilt not stir out two or three miles to be edified? Thy desires are like wandering vagrants, that will be everywhere wandering, but only there where they should be. So thy desires go roving up and *down* and you are happy, and he is happy, and thou art unwilling in the mean time to labour, where and how God hath appointed thee. These are none but gadding, wandering desires; *better is the sight of the eyes then the wandering of the desire*. Eccl. 6. 9. thy desires *wander abroad* to a roming company of *wishes*, but thou wilt not observe that which God gives thee to see; thus much of the third^d Objection, drawn from desire.

The fourth Objection.

Thou resolvest and hast good purposes, but oh thou canst not performe them.

I answer thee, do but consider what thy purpose is, and thou shalt see how thou art cozened; these purposes thou speak'st of are only *voluntates de futuro*. I will hereafter looke

to it better then I have done heretofore. Hereafter I wil, I suppose, that is hereafter I wil; alas, this wil for hereafter is no will.

First, because its onely to shuffle off the willing for the present. Now the heart is unwilling to obey, and therefore it puts off the commandment to hereafter, not for any such desire that it hath to do it hereafter, but only because it is nnwilling to do it for the present. Like a man that is unwilling to lend, He lend you hereafter, saies he, *Say not unto thy neighbour, goe and come again, and to morrow I will give thee, when thou hast it by thee*, Prov. 3. 28. his purpose to lend him to morrow, was onely becaule he would shuffle off the lending to day. And therefore this purpose of willing hereafter, is no wil at all, but only to shuffle off the willing for the present. Thou hast the opportunity by thee, why dost thou not take it? thou hast the temptation by thee, why dost thou not resist it? dost thou say thou hast a wil for hereafter? that is but a gull, that thou mayst not wil for the present.

Secondly, this will for hereafter is no will, because it goes without Gods, no wil can goe without God. Gods wil is now, he would have thee now, and thou wilt not, thou wilt hereafter, but then may be he wil not. He that wil not when he may, when he would he shall have nay; afterwards when thou wouldst faine be converted, and pardoned, &c. Lord open to me, nay but O man, when I would thou wouldst not; now thou wouldst, but I wil not, thy wil is for hereafter goes, without Gods, and therefore tis no wil.

Thirdly

Thirdly, thy wil for hereafter is no wil, because thou shalt misse those suppositions that thou wiltst upon.

First, thou supposhest thou shalt have fewer temptations hereafter. O when these troubles are over, and these temptations are over, I wil; nay, but O man, when these are all over, new ones wil come. And if the temptations for the present be a hindrance, some temptation or other as bad thou shalt meet with, that shal hinder thee hereafter much more, and therefore this supposition is false.

Secondly, thou supposhest thou shalt be fitter hereafter; but, *qui non est hodie cras minus aptus erit*, if thou beest not fit now, much lesse wilt thou be afterwards; thou'lt be unfitted and unfitter, like meat, the longer it is kept, the unfitter tis to be eaten, and therefore this supposition is false too.

Fourthly, thy wil for hereafter is no wil, but a mockery. *Antigonus* ὁ δῶσιν, *Antigonus*, I will give, this is not good in mens Lawes, much lesse in Gods. *Dabo*, I wil give; this is no gift, sayes the Law. *So resipiscam*, I wil repent; this is no repentance, sayes God. Thus you see this Objection is nothing, never tell me of thy purposes, thy purposes are willings for hereafter, and they are no wils at all.

The fifth Objection.

Thou endeavourest and labourest to serve God,
and to be saved.

5 Object.
answered

• I answer thee, Alas, Is this to labour for grace,
and

and for Heaven, when thou labourest so idly? as God said of that fasting; so may J say of thy labour, Is this the fast that I have chosen? to afflict a mans selfe for a day? So, is this the labour that I have chosen? To labour so as thou labourest? but J need not to insist on this plea, thy conscience is able to answer it. Thou labour? thy conscience knowes well enough thou art lazy, thou dost not labour for holiness; so then thy impenitency is wilful, and thy damnation wilful and thy ruine wilful.

To conclude then, understand all that you will not hear and obey.

First, that your *destruction is from selfe*, you cannot cast it upon God; hee offers you the means to escape it, and you will not, *Hos. 13.9.*

Secondly, your *destruction is most just*, you cannot aledge severity and cruelty; no; your selves are cruell ones. You judge your own selves unto Hell. The Lord *presseth the Gospel* of grace upon you, and you put it off *Act. 13.46.*

Thirdly, your *destruction is inexcusable*, you having nothing to excuse you: God hath taken away all clokes of excuses, he hath offered you *saving knowledge*, & you would not; a *Christ* and ye would not: *good motions*, counsels, threatnings, and you would not. Your mouthes are quite stopped when you perish, *Math. 22.12.*

Fourthly, your *destruction is unavoidable*; if you would have relented and yeilded, there might have been hope, but you would not. You have *hardned your necks*, and what's that but a *will not*? Therefore you shall be *destroyed without remedy*, *Prov. 29.1.*

Fifthly, your destruction is pittiless; what eye can pittie you? *Will, wil have wil, though Will will have woe*, as we say, not God, nor Angels, nor Saints, no eye can pittie you. If the thiefe wil steal, and will to the Gallowse, let him goe: he is no object of pittie: as we say of a wilful man; no tale can tune him to take heed, so no meanes can tune you to take heed; and therefore when you rue it, you cannot be pittied.

Sixthly, your destruction is grievous; of all plagues, none wil fret more then those which one hath wilfully puld on himselfe. You'l one day gnash your own teeth, *curse your own wils*, banne your uwn hearts; woe is me, I am under the rod, and my selfe gathered it; in *Hell*, and my selfe kindled it. I might have prevnted it, but I would not.

Now follows the Application.

Learne instruction then, least ye perish wilfully; reforme as much as you may, downe with all your disorders, stumbling *blockes of iniquities*, and all the *Idols of your hearts*, and cast them into the *brooke Kidron*, Set up good courses as much as you may, use all the means to salvation as humbly as you may; let not any family be without the due worship of God in it. Fathers, suffer not sinne on your children, nor Masters on your servants, lie not, sweare not, covet not, omit not the exercises of hope, least yee justly, inexcusably, unavoidably, pittilessly perish, and so reproach *your wne willes for ever in Tophet*; as David then
said

said unto *Salomon*, after he had set him busines-
ses to doe, *arise therefore and be doing, and the*
Lord be with thee, saies he, *1 Chron. 22. 16*, So I
may say to you, *Arise and be doing*; up, set a-
bout it, use no excuses, humble your selves be-
fore God, see your misery and bewaile it, and
the Lord be with you.

BUt may be you wil say, this Doctrine is *Pe-*
lagianisme, or *Armenianisme* at least. Nay
then, let me tell you, tis *Arminianisme* to hold
the contrary. You make your wils to be your
own, and free for to will, that say your wil is to
repent, but you cannot. And if God should give
you a *posse*, ye professe your selves to be of the
Pelagian heresie; if God should give you a power
you would adde the wil. To passe over this, and
so to goe on.

Except the beliefe of this truth doe sink into
thy heart, thou canst never soundly be hum-
bled; if thou shouldst say, Lord, I would faine
have repented all this while, but I could not,
thou never soundly wert humbled: a man is
never humbled as long as he excuses himselfe:
thou sayest I would be holier, I would pray
better, and I would reform more, but I cannot;
this is to fall to excuses, and not to be hum-
bled: For,

First, thou excuseth thy self for all transgres-
sions besides original. A man must be hum-
bled for his actual sinnes as wel as original,
and count himselfe inexcusable for one as well
as tother. But thou pitchest all thy humilia-
tion

tion upon thy Apostacy in *Adam*, if now thou pleadest a cannot. Lord, I confesse I was conceived in sinne, but now I cannot doe withal; I cannot doe otherwise though I would never so faine. I cannot but drink now and then and be drunke, I cannot but rap out an Oath now and then in my hast, &c. I confesse I brought this cannot upon me in the loyns of *Adam*; but upon the supposal of that, dost thou bid me give over my sinnes? I cannot; this is not to be humbled but to fall to excuses. Its true, actual corruption which naturally flows from original, requires that one and self same humiliation that original does. But otherwise thou must be humble with a new humiliation for thine actual transgressions, or else thou art not humbled but pleadest excuses. *David* humbles himselfe for both, with one humiliation for the one, *Psa. 51. 5.* with another for the other, *v. 3.* But as long as thou pleadest on this faction, thou excusest thy self for thy actual sins, and never art humbled.

Nay secondly thou excusest thy self for thy original sin too. Lord, I would be without sin, ^{2 Excuse} but I cannot, if I would I could; belike then if it had been thy case as it was *Adams* thou wouldst not have eaten of the forbidden fruit. And therefore it was his fault and not thine, thou wouldst not have sinned if thou couldst have otherwise chused. And therefore thou excusest thy self for that too; for thou sayest thou wouldst not have sinned if thou hadst been as hee, he sinned when he might have
H otherwise

otherwise chused; but thou wouldst not have done so. Thus thou excuseth thy selfe for thine originall sinne too; And therefore thou canst not be humbled as long as thou pleadst thus; the truth is thou didst willingly sin as well as *Adam*. God made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions. Eccles. 7. 29. hee speaketh of *Adams* being upright; God made *Adam* upright: hee does not say but man hath found out many inventions, as though it were his fault alone that was created upright. No, God made man upright, but they, marke, hee casts the blanie upon every man as well as *Adam*. But they have sought out many inventions. Thus we must be humbled for our originall corruption: but thou canst not be humbled as long as thou pleadst on this maner: no thou excuseth thy selfe, and therefore thou wert never yet humbled.

Note.

Nay thirdly, thou excuseth thy selfe for every
 3 *Excuse* sin, thou makest all thy sins to be nothing but infirmities, as though *Pauls* case were thine: the good which J would do, that do J not, and the evill which J would not do, that do J. I would be godlier then I am, but I cannot: and therefore thou makest all thy sins to be infirmities. What is a sin of infirmity but a sin the will protesteth against? thou saiest that thy will protesteth against every of thy sins, thou wouldst leave them, but thou canst not. See then how far thou art from sound humiliation: thy presumptuous sins are all nothing with thee, thy stubbornnesse nothing, and thy wilfulnesse nothing.

Sin of infirmity.

thing, no all thy sins are infirmities. Nay thou makast thy sins to be purely and onely infirmities, invincible infirmities: invincible infirmities are the most excusable of all. Now when thou saiest thou stickest at a Cannon, thou makest thy sin, not onely infirmities, but also invincible infirmities, such as thou canst not possibly avoid, thou wouldst faine avoid them but thou canst not: and therefore if thou goest this way to worke thou canst never be humbled.

Nay fourthly, Thou commendest thy selfe 4 *Excuse* more then God: nay if ever God should inable thee and give the power to be a new creature, thou makest thy selfe more beholding to thy selfe then to God. The will is more ahen the power: the will to believe and repent and convert, is more then the power: *Actus secundus est nobilior actu primo.* To be able to believe and to bee able to repent, and become a new Creature, these are but first acts. If God would helpe thee to these, thou saiest thou wouldst adde tother. Thou wouldst believe and thou wouldst convert, and thou wouldst be a new creature: it God would give thee the power, thou wouldst adde the act. And therefore thou commendest thy selfe more then God: for in moral powers which have a further referance unto act, the act is more noble then the power. The truth is, the will is better then the power of doing: and both is of God, and so the Apostle does shew it. Its God that worketh in you, speaking of the Saints: *Its God that worketh in you both the will and the*
H 2 *deed,*

Note.

deed, Phil. 1. 13. mark, the will and the deed First the will and then power to bring it into deed; the will is the primary blessing of God. And this is the reason why a Child of Gods estate is now better under Christ, then it was before in innocency, for then he had only power if he would; and now both the will and the deed. I say this is the truth, the wil is more then the power; and therefore thou wert never humbled in thy selfe, that pleadest, O I would, if I could; thou makest thy selfe more beholding to self then to God, if God should ever convert thee, and therefore thou art not yet capable of conversion; why? thou art not yet humbled, but standst at proud terms with the Lord.

5 *Excuse* Nay fifthly, thou canst not so much as pray to God for a will, thou art so proud, that thou art conceited thou hast that already. I have as good will to be good as any body else, but I cannot possibly do as I would; so that all thy prayers to God are a mockery, The godly humble soule prayes as the ancient Church used to pray; *Lord give me a will to be good which my will is set against.* But thou canst not pray so, thou art a richer begger then so; for thou hadst a good will already thou thinkest. A man cannot pray for a thing the lack whereof he is not sensible whereof: *If any man lack wisedome, let him ask it of God,* James 1. 5. He cannot pray for a thing if hee doe not think that he lacks it: Nor thou for a will, for thou doest not thinke that thou lackest it. Nay if God should convert thee thou canst not give him thanks for converting thee: for thy

*Apud Cas-
sandrū
Domine doc
me quo non
celo.*

thy will needed none : may be thou wilt pray for possibilities till thou hast them, and give him thanks for possibilities when thou hast them, but thou canst not pray for a will, for thou thinkest thou hast it ; nor give him thanks for thy will, for that is thine own. So that thou art devilishly proud, never humbled since thou wert borne. Nay thou art so proud that all thy prayers are but mockeries, and thy giving of thanks is a mockery. How canst thou look that God should convert thee, when as thy proud heart tells God before hand, thou wouldst not thank him if he should.

Nay sixthly, Thou casteth all the blame upon God; for its even just as if thou shouldst say, *Excuse* I cannot help it if God be not pleased to inable mee, how can I help it? my wil is as good as anothers', such and are so forward and so Heavenly, God gives them the power ; but my wil God knowes is as good as theirs, I would faine doe as wel as the best, but I cannot ; O if God would inable mee, I would. O Beloved, take heed of these conceits, for ye cast all the blame upon God; where as the blame is in your selves, yee would not be inabled. I say yee cast all the blame upon God.

Carnal men excuse themselves, and cast the blame upon God.

First, because ye cast the blame upon nature, *Demon.* its my nature, and I cannot : I would, but its my nature and I cannot. Thou layest the blame upon thy Nature, and therefore thou castest the blame upon God for not helping thee to a better nature : it is God that justly determines mens natures. Ones nature is more cholerick

lerik, anothers more fearful, another more lazy, anothers more lustful. Dost thou lay the blame upon nature, my nature is more subject to choler, and wrath? Alas, thou laiest blame upon God. For its hee that disposeth of mens natures: and therefore, thou takest part with those wretches that said, *why hast thou made mee thus?* Rom. 9. 20. thou laiest the blame upon God, J would not do thus, but onely 'tis my nature, and J cannot helpe it. No. And wilt thou lay the blame upon God? No, no: this is thy nature and thou art contented with this nature:

2 *Demon*

Secondly, Thou dost cast the blame upon temptations, it is my hard hap to fall upon temptations. J was tempted or J would not have done it: this is to cast the blame upon God too, for it is his providence to order temptations. Such and such temptations for one man, such and such for another, such now and such then. Its the providence of God that disposeth which and which temptations every man shall have. One shall have temptations to Pride, another temptation to Wrath, another to Revenge, another to Covetousnesse. Its true: God tempteth no man, but hee orders the temptations of men. *Let no man say hee is tempted of God, for God tempteth no man.* No, every man is tempted to sin by his own lusts. Thus thou wouldst say if thou wert humbled: but thou laiest the blame upon God: it was long of temptations that I did it. This is as if thou shouldst say 'twas long of God, that

Jam. 1. 13

that J did it, because 'twas Gods providence that suffered these temptations to bee laid for thee.



3 *Demon*

Thirdly, because thou laiest the blame upon the times, the times are very hard. J would not go in this fashion, but onely that the times require it. I would be more given to fasting and repeating the Word, &c. I would willingly be more forward then I am, but the times are very bad; This is to lay the blame upon God, for God setteth every mans time. If I had been in Christs time, or *Pauls* time, or *Queene Elizabeths* time, J would have done thus and thus. Thou laiest the blame upon God, for God setteth every mans time; When God from eternity made his common place-Booke of all the whole World, hee appointed such and such to live first, such next, and such last; Such and such to live here, and such there; Such at *Rochford*, and such at *London*; so saies the Apostle, *hee hath made of one blood all Nations of men, to dwell on all the face of the Earth; and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitations, Act. 17.26.* marke, hee hath appointed the times. And the places. The times when they shall live, and the places where. God setteth mens times; and therefore thou which laiest the blame upon the times, laiest the blame upon God.

4 *Demon*

Fourthly, because thou laiest the blame upon this Commandement, if it were any Commandement but this, J would do it; But this J cannot do; if it were any other injury but this,

this, any disgrace but this I would willingly put it up, but J cannot put up this; if it were any duty but this; J would do any thing but this, but to root out all disorders out of my house, alas J cannot do this, J cannot live, as good keepe no Inne at all, as not suffer men to call for what they would, J cannot do this; this is to cast the blame upon God too, that hee should make such a Commandement as this, he should have done well to have made another Law, and penned another Gospel, and then J would have kept it: thou laiest the blame upon God for it is God that made all these commandements, these are the commandements of the Lord, *Deut. 6.1. The Lord made all the Commandements*, and this too, and therefore if thou laiest the blame upon this, thou laiest the blame upon God.

5 *Demon* Fifthly, because thou laiest the blame upon ill fortune and bad lucke, it was my ill fortune to marry a shew, and J cannot but fret and lie out of doores. Alas, marriages are made in heaven, and God hath decreed them; thus thou laiest the blame upon God: 'twas my ill fortune to miscarry, to light upon such a companion, to be so overtaken as I was, I would willingly have had it to have been otherwise, but I had not the luck of it, and it fel out very unluckily; thus thou committest two evils, thou playest the Atheist in speaking of fortune, like them in the Prophet that prepared a *table for fortune*, as the word signifies, *Esay 65.11. I say*, thou committest two evils, one in calling it Fortune; the other, thou layest the blame upon God,

Note.

That
which
men call
fortune
is Gods
provi-
dence.

God, for that which thou profoundly callest
fortune and luck, its *ἄνθρωπος τι καὶ θαύματος ὡς*,
sayes Aristotle, the very Heathen is able to tell
it is God, and the Scripture puts it for Gods
providence; and therefore when thou layest the
blame upon ill fortune, thou layest the blame
upon God; so that hence we may see, that thou
canst never be humbled as long as thou plead-
est on this wise before God. I would very wil-
lingly, but I cannot: I say, thou canst never be
humbled, because this is to lay the blame up-
on God. Indeed a child of God, that of unwill-
ing is made willing, hee may plead a cannot
before Christ without laying the blame upon
God. Lord, I cannot humble my proud heart,
nor crucifie this bewitching lust of mine, Lord
I am not able to doe it, I beseech thee to helpe
me. I say a child of God that is sincerely wil-
ling to doe it, may plead a cannot before Christ;
nay Christ, his promise can no where be ap-
plied, but where the soule can truly plead a
cannot. He giveth power to the faint, to him that
hath no might I wil encrease strength, *Esay* 40.
29. when the soule lies tugging and pulling
at his heart, and cannot pull it up, striving and
endeavouring, and using all holy meanes and
cannot, its even faint with pulling and tug-
ging at that which it cannot. As we know twil
make any man faint to be tugging at a mil-
stone, which he cannot pul up. When the soule
lies thus at a cannot, I wil give power, sayes
Christ, though it have no strength, I wil enable
it: a child of God that is willing, may plead a
cannot, without laying the blame upon God, but
then

Lord
Christ
sincerely

then he humbles his soul for his former wil-
 nots, nay for his too: too many will nots for
 the present. But thou canst never be humbled
 while thou livest, if thou pleabst thus a cannot,
 because thou laiest the blame upon God.

*why does he
 bid me repent* Nay sixthly, thou canst not be humbled be-
 cause thou dost not onely lay the blame up-
 on God for thy sins, but thou findest fault with
 all Gods proceedings; it is as if thou shouldest
 say, why does he bid me repent, when he
 knowes I cannot? why does he yet complaine?
Rom. 9. 19. he knowes I cannot, why does he
 wooc me to doe that which I cannot? or pro-
 mise me blessings if I do, when he knowes that
 I cannot? why does he helpe me to more and
 more knowledge? he does but hurt me with
 knowledge, and make my sins to be worse,
 which I cannot forsake. My sins are now
 against knowledge, and Ministers tell me that
 is worse; this is all that I get by your preach-
 ing; nay thou findest fault with all Gods
 correction: why does he punish me for not
 doing of that which I cannot? thus thou art
 far from being humbled: the truth is, thou
 mightest get a great deale by knowledge, by
 exhortation, and reproofes, and corrections,
 but thou wilt not: is it not easier to leave a
 sin when thou knowest it, then when thou
 art ignorant of it? to be moved when thou
 art exhorted, then when thou art not admon-
 ished at all? to forsake a sinful course when
 once God hath imbittered it to thy flesh by
 corrections, then when it was sweete? is it not
 easier to give over drunkenesse, when thy ex-
 cesse

cessie is bitter to thy stomacke, then when it was pleasant? so it is with every other sin, thou mightst get a great deale of God by every one of Gods dealings, but thou wilt not. *Why should you be stricken any more? yee will revolt more and more, Esay 1.5.* Yee will saies God, this is Gods language he finds fault with thy will, but thou findest fault with his will; Why does he smite me more and more, J cannot but revolt? J cannot do as he would have me; may be thy lusts are more mannerly then to say thus; but this secret grumbling is in thee, if thou saiest that thou stickest at a cannot, and therefore thou canst not be humbled.

In the second place, if it be thus, the reason why thou dost not amend, is not because thou canst not, but because thou wilt not.

Vse 2.
Which
discovers
the hearts
deceitful-
nesse.

See here then the deceit of thy heart.

If God would give me grace, J would willingly doe any thing; this is nothing but the deceitfulnesse of thy heart, which is deceitful above all things. For thy heart does but here lie unto God; J would very faine, if God would inable me; thou liest; God knowes it is not so: like the wilful Jewes, they would be Gods people; they would stay themselves upon God; God tels them in effect they lied, *I knew thou wert obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brasse, Isay 48. 4.* wouldst thou believe mee? No, no, J know thou art obstinate and will not; so God knowes thou art obstinate. J cannot see this is a sin to say faith
and

Jer. 17. 9.

and truth, I cannot see 'tis a sinne not to pray daily in my family, not to repeat the Sermon every Sabbath : if I could see it were a sinne, I would mend it ; no, no, thou liest unto God, *ob/tuna* thou art obstinate, and thou wouldst not have it a sinne, and thou wilt not believe it, and if thou didst know it to be one, thou wouldst not reform it.

Secondly, hereby thou dodgest with God, and thou tempest the Lord. If God would give me grace, I would doe it ; this is nothing but dallying and trifling with the Lord ; for why dost thou not set about it, and try every day what thou caust do? if God would but quicken me, and perswade me, and compel me, and enable me, I would do it. Alas thou dodgest with God, as the people in the Gospel, *dodgest with God* if he wil come down from the Cross, we wil believe in him, Mat. 27. 42. they had no wil to believe in him, this was nothing but dodging : Christ had done enough for them to make them believe, if they had any such wil, and this was nothing but a pretence of their deceitful heart.

Thirdly, hereby thou shufflest off the word, when thou hast heard it, *God give* God give me grace to do so as he hath taught me this day, alas I cannot my selfe, God give me grace, and so shuffled it off, and thinkest no more of it : like (those you call) *godfathers* in some places, as soon as ever they are charged at the Font to look to the child, and see him brought up in religion, they presently goe and put off the charge on the Father, I pray you take the charge upon you : so thou layest the charge at Gods doore,

doore, when God gives thee any duty in charge, thou layest it at his doore, as though it stuck there, and there thou lettest it lie, not setting about it to doe it: God give me grace, repentance is his gift, and if he doe but give it, I cannot repent, I would but I cannot, if he doe not give it: the speech is very good, and becomes a godly soule that makes conscience of the means to say it, but this is thy shuffling to lay it at Gods doore, as though it stuck there; God tels thee plainly, it does not stick at him, hee would have all to come unto repentance, 2 Pet. 3. 9. but thou wilt not come, and this is the deceit of my heart to shuffle it from thee.

In the third place, is it so, that the reason why thou dost not amend, is not because thou canst not, but only because thou wilt not?

Oh then my brethren learn to be humbled.

This point calls for humiliation.

First, here lies especially the pride of the heart, not in mens *cannots*, but their *will nots*, when a soule does whatsoever it can, reformes as much as it can, uses as many meanes as it can, and as often as it can, this is not a proud heart, but a *proud* heart is that especially which sticketh at a wil not. If ye wil not heare, my soule shall weep in secret places for your pride, Jer. 13. 17. marke, for your pride, if you *will not*; he does not say, if you cannot, my soule shall weep for your pride, if ye stick at a cannot

Use 3.
Engage
to humili-
ation.

not, but if ye stick at a will not, doe not thinke this point does lift up mens wills, no, this point does as much beat at the humbling of the will, as any point under heaven; for here lies the pride of the will, and therefore here yee must be humbled.

Secondly, here lies especially the hardning of the heart: when a man sticks at a cannot, he does not more and more harden his heart, but onely sticks at the same hardnes he had. Beloved, *thou dost then harden thy heart when thou wilt not obey*, and therefore here's most need of thy humbling, to be humbled for thy wil-nots; its said of Pharaoh *hee hardened his heart*, Exod. 9. 34. what followes? *he would not let the children of Israel goe*: thy will nots these are they that harden thy heart: dost thou complaine of the hardnesse of thy heart? O goe and humble thy soule for thy will nots, these are the hardners of thy heart, nay let me tell thee, thou hast no hardnes of heart no more then an infant or a babe, but only that which thy will nots have made thee, and therefore thou hast great reason to bee humbled for thy will nots.

Thirdly, here lies especially the stubbornnes of the heart; when a child that is commanded by his Parents to obey, stickes at a cannot, hee obeyes as far as he can, but onely he sticks at a cannot, he is not stubborn; stubbornnesse is when one sticks at a will not: if a man have a stubborn son which will not obey the voice of his Father. Deut. 21. 18. so here lies especially the

the stubbornness of thy heart, and therefore here's most humiliation required.

Fourthly, here lies the greatest *despisings* of the *Commandment* of God; authority is never so much despised as when men will not submit to it: a Father is despised when a son will not hear him; and a Master is despised when his servant will not do as he bids him; nay commandment cannot be despised but by will nots, it may be omitted, and not obeyed by cannots, but it cannot be despised but by will nots; if ye shall *despise my statutes*, so that ye will not do all my *Commandments*, &c: *Levit. 26. 15.* O what infinite reason hast thou to be humbled, that despisest the Lord? He cannot endure that men should despise him; he can put up any other wrong rather than this, that men should despise him: but to be slighted and despised he will not, cannot endure it. *For three transgressions of Judah, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof, because they have despised the Law of the Lord, Amos 2. 4.* he will not turn away the punishment of this sin, when men do despise him, what infinite need then hast thou to be humbled under thy will not, thou despisest the Commandment.

Here's a word to you that are Godly; O what mercy hath the Lord shewed to you, and how ought you to be thankful! never was there such mercy as this to shew mercy to the wilful; O woeful soul, be his misery never so great, hee is not the fit object of mercy: for though misery be mercies object, yet joyn'd with wilfulness

4. Use.
To quicken the
thankfulness
of the godly.

Note.

fulnesse its not to be pittied ; you have been as wilful as any, all cut out of the same rock; the Lord hath not onely helpt you to mercy and grace, but also, to a will to take it. When Lot was unwilling to go out of *Sodome*, the Lord took him by the arme, and carried him perforce; now now see how the Text expresse it : the Angels took hold of his band, the Lord being merciful unto him, and they brought him forth, *Gen. 19. 16.* As if he should say, would you saine stay ? you shall not; would you stand lingring to be consumed with fire and brimstone ? you shall not ; the Lord was merciful to him whether he would or no. So you had no mercy on your selves, bat the Lord had ; yee were wilful against mercie, and the Lord fastned mercy on you, whether you would or no, he commanded his loving kindnesse, *Psal. 42. 8.* go mercy and seize on them, go loving kindnesse, and make them take yee ; not as though God converted you against your wills : for when he converted you , your unwillingnesse was taken away ; but he made you ofnnwilling, willing. Oh the infinite mercy of God, and the infinite cause you have to be thanke-

5 Use. *ye ful*
It is
 A season-
 able Item
 to all re-
 bellious
 spirits.

Be wise

In the fifth place, to you that stand out in your wilfulnesse still ; is it so that ye sticke at a will not ? then be exhorted to be much in abasing your selves before the Lord : your stoutnesse is intollerable, that you dare set up the briars and thornes against God in battel ; down with them and be wise: you harden your own

own hearts, and disable your selves more and more for repenting of it; ye despise the Lords name by the stubbornesse of our froward will, you can never be saved except your wills stoop: before *Christ will meddle with a soul, bee'le first aske, art thou willing?* as he ask'd the blind man, *what wilt thou that I do unto thee?* Lord saies he that J may receive my sight, *Luk. 18.41.* So the first question he puts to thee is, what wilt thou? Lord that J may be humble, converted, purged: if thou bee'st wilful, though he never take thee in hand, but leave thee to thy selfe, he will be justified in thine eternall confusion. Psal, 81. 11

First, is it not enough that thou hast willingly fallen in *Adam*, but thou must willingly stand out againe? God now calls thee to meanes of grace, thou hast stood out once already, and wilt thou be wilful to stand out againe? as *Israel*, though in a mistake, said to their brethren, is the iniquity of *Peor* too little for us; from the which we are cleansed to this day? but that ye must turne away this day too? *Iosh. 22.17.* So may J say, is your willing apostacy in *Adam* too little for you, from the which yee are not cleansed to this day but ye must willingly stand out against Christ too? Consider.

Secondly, consider the very Saints of God that have not halfe so many will nots as you, that stick more truly at a cannot; J would do the good but J cannot. J say the very Saints of God they labour to humble themselves every day: *O wretched man that I am* saies Paul, *Rom. 7.24.* does Paul cry out, Oh wretched man that

that I am? he was a Saint of God, and heire of heaven, and sure of blisse; does he cry out of himself, that he was wretched? oh what infinite need then hast thou to be humbled! Thou art yet a child of hell, and heire of damnation, wilful in thy sins to this houre, *Ob wretched man that I am.*

Thirdly, consider the more shameful ones sin is the more reason to be humbled; thy sin is most shameful; for thou corruptest thy selfe, *they have corrupted themselves*, Deut. 32. 5. so thou corruptest thy selfe, thy wil corrupteth it selfe.

Nay fourthly, consider there's no greater shame then to make away ones selfe; thou destroyest thy selfe; *Ob Israel thou destroyest thy selfe.* More credit to be stab'd by the high way, nay more credit to be hanged on a *Patibulum* as a *Malefactor*, then to murder ones selfe. Put him into a hole, drive a stake through his body, set a Monument of shame on him. (I do not know whether it be so among you, but) it is so in some places, when a man murders himselfe. So thou dost murder thy selfe, nay more thy best selfe; thou makest away thy soul. Be vext then with thy wicked wil, what a madde man am I? I wil have this lust, and I wil have that passion, like the people, we wil have a King over us; no, sayes Samuel, the Lord your God is your King; nay, but we *wil have a King*. So thou art wilful, and thou wilt doe thus; Oh doe not do it, the Lord hath forbidden thee? Nay, but I wil doe it. Thus thou art wilful, and thou wilt to Hel; vex thine

Wilful
disobedi-
ence is
soule-
murder.

1 Sam. 12.
12.

thine own heart with this. When a wilful Malefactor comes afterwards to know that if he had not been wilful the Judge would have saved him, Oh how wil it vex him! he could even rend his own haire, and tear his own flesh, what a mad man was I! I forsook mine own Clergy; so thou forefakest thine own Clergy, thine own mercy, *they that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy, Jonah 2.8.* vex thine own heart with it, say I have forsaken mine own mercy.

Fifthly, consider if you would but vex your own soules with this serious consideration, it would make you kicke your lusts under foote, and cry out upon them, out upon you, get yee hence, as they cried out upon their Idols, *Esay 30.22.* get yee hence, get yee hence, here is no entertainment for you from henceforth. I forsake mine own mercy as long as I keep you.

*Having shewed you, that except your beliefe of
this point be rooted in your hearts, ye
can never be humbled:*

First, because hereby you excuse your selves from all your transgressions besides original.

Nay secondly, ye excuse your selves for your original sin too.

Nay thirdly, you make all your finnes to be nothing but infirmities, invincible infirmities.

Nay fourthly, you commend your selves more then God

Nay fifthly, you block up the way to the throne of grace.

Nay sixthly, you cast all the blame upon God.

First, because you lay the blame upon nature.

Secondly, because thou casts the blame on temptations.

Thirdly, because you lay the blame on the times.

Fourthly, because you lay the blame upon the Commandement.

Nay seventhly, you finde fault with all the dealings of God.

Oh take heed then of these base pleas and pretences: for,

That I may interpose four or five particulars unnamed.

First, this same pleading is the cause why you are lazie and idle in the use of means; namely, because we suffer our hearts to plead, Oh we cannot doe thus; wee cannot beat down this evil? why did the unjust Steward refuse honest labour to work for his living. *I cannot dig*, saies he, *Luke 16.3*. therefore he refused to labour; so this is the cause why ye pray no more, and reform no more, &c. Ye set your hearts thus to plead, I cannot doe it: This is the reason why ye are backward to labour; how know ye what may be done if ye would buckle to labour? but alas, *I cannot do it*, say you; and therefore ye are dead and dull, and sluggish to every good Ordinance. Shake off these lazy-hearted pleas, otherwise yee'l never buckle to labour.

Secondly,

Secondly, this same pleading brings up an ill report upon piety and godlinesse; generally men think Religion is so irksome, and Holinesse is impossible. We cannot be Saints, and we are not able to be so holy; these pleas bring an evil report on Religion. Like the Spies that brought an evil report upon *Canaan*. Num. 13. 23. What sayes the Text in the verse going before? we be not able to get it, say they, vers. 31. this made the rest of the people thinke hardly of their going into *Canann*: they generally thought it was to very little end. Oh they were not able to winne it: so ye bring an evil report upon the *Heavenly Canaan*, the flesh is too strong, the diuel too strong, temptations too strong, and its impossible to grapple with them all, wee are not able to get mastery. I say this brings up an evil report on Religion, yee discourage one another. I cannot get quickning, and I cannot deny my selfe. Yee bring up an evil report upon these duties, and ye are guilty of the evil report that goes up and down.

Thirdly, this same pleading is a murmuring against God *q.d.* Why does God give me such Commandements that I cannot observe? Why does he charge me to root out a lust that I cannot root out? this is to murmur against God. Like those *murmuring Disciples* in the Gospel, when they were told they must feede upon Christ, and as the *body* feeds upon *meat*, so your soules must feede upon Christ; this is a hard saying, who can heare it, say they? Christ construed this speech to be *murmuring*, Joh. 6.60,
61.

61. Wee cannot do this, and this is so hard we are not able to do it. The text saies it was murmuring, *when Jesus knew in himselfe that his Disciples murmured at it*; that pleading of a cannot was a murmuring. So when thou grumblest on this manner J cannot walk thus, J cannot believe thus, &c. this is to murmur against God, nay this will bring thee to Apostacy at last, if thou suffer thy heart to plead thus. May be now thou art a forward professor, yet beest thou never so forward and favourest any lust, and J cannot give it over, J cannot root it out, &c. J say this will breake thy neck at the last, if thou dost not looke to it. So it was with those forenamed Disciples, they were very forward Professors, for they were the Disciples of Christ saies the Text, yet those Disciples, *they went away back and walked no more with Christ*, vers. 66. their pleadings of their cannots, drove them to Apostacy; they went away back. So thou wilt go away back, and fall into Apostacy if thou suffer thy heart to stand pleading of cannots in this manner.

Fourthly, this is the sawsiest excuse of all excuses, many sinners excuse their own selves but there is more mannerlinesse in all their excuses: I pray thee have me excused, saies one, I have bought five yoke of Oxen, and I pray thee have mee excused; saies the other, I have bought a purchase, I pray thee have me excused. These though wretched excusers and turped out from all mercy, yet they were somewhat more mannerly; but I cannot come saies thou; I have married a Wife, and J cannot come, Luke 14.

20. this is a most sawcy excuse, thou tellest Christ in plaine termes, I cannot come, *q.d.* yee may even save your labour to invite, for this is short and long, as we say, I cannot come. This I put in only by the by.

I have shewed you some of the deceits of the heart in pleading these cannots.

First, How it lies unto God.

Secondly, how it dallies with God.

Thirdly, how hereby it puts off the word.

And then I shewed you the strong reason we have to be humbled under these wil-nots.

First, because here chiefly lies the pride of the heart, not in mens cannots, but in their will-nots Jer. 13. 17.

Secondly, here lies chiefly the hardning of the heart, Exod. 9. 34. 35.

Thirdly, here lies chiefly the stubbornnesse of the heart, Deut. 21. 18.

Fourthly, here lies chiefly the great despising of the Commandements of God, Levit. 26. 15.

Fifthly, now to go on, here lies the reason why Divines say that the conversion of a sinner is a harder work then the Creation of Heaven and Earth; for thus they do reason: when God created Heaven and Earth; hee had nothing to resist him; as hee had nothing to helpe him, (hee made all of nothing) so he had nothing to resist him. There was but one difficulty in the Creation of Heaven and Earth; but in the conversion of a sinner there be two difficulties.

First, here is the same difficulty that was in creation, for God makes a Convert of nothing; he had nothing to helpe him, not one thought,
not

not one desire, not one good inclination : and therefore the Scripture calls it a new Creation: whosoever is in *Christ is a new creature.* 2 Cor. 5. 17. that is, is created a new. And, therefore there was nothing præixistent, no not one thought, all the thoughts of men are onely evil, and that continually. So there is the same difficulty, that was in the creation of Heaven and Earth : and then

Secondly, there is another difficulty more then there was in the creation : for as there was nothing præixistent to help, so there was nothing to resist. But here is something to resist, the will it resisteth : now the cannot does not resist. No, the bestowing of the new powers is no more then another Creation. But the changing of the will is more then another Creation, for the wil it resisteth, yea and it sets all the soul a resisting. Carnal reason resisteth, carnal desires they resist, all the soule it resisteth : and the greatest resistance of all is the resistance of the wil : for the wil is the utmost strength of the soule. And therefore here lies the infinite difficulty of the conversion of a sinner, namely in the turning of the will : it requireth more power, then was required to the creation of Heaven and Earth: God put himselfe forth more when he converteth a sinner, then when he created a World ; and therefore the Scripture calls the day of conversion of mens wils, the day of his power. Thy people shal be *willing in the day of thy power,* Psal. 110. 3. In the day of thy power ; marke, its called a day of thy power : when hee converteth

verteth a people to be willing. Why? because the wil did resist him; nay God had his own selfe to resist him, anger steps in his way to resist him. Convert him not Lord, his wilfulnesse hath anger'd thee; Justice stept in to resist him, save him not Lord, his finnes have dishonoured thee. Nay he had his mercie to resist him: Mercie steps in, Lord he hath abused mee, save him not. Indeed had a sinner yeilded as soone as hee sinned, mercie would not resist him; but mercie had beene dealing with him, and hee abused all mercie. And therefore he had mercie to resist, nay and wisdom one would think to resist too, what a wilful foole? pittie him not Lord. There is no reason he should be pittied, if hee wil perish let him perish. I say in the conversion of a sinner, as there was nothing to assist him, so there was all to resist. The wil does resist him nay God had himselfe as I may so speake to resist him: yea, and mercie to resist him: it was not so in the creation of Heaven and Earth. The creature had never provoked God not to create it: but the sinner hath provoked God never to convert him, so that now God must have power over himself if he mean to convert him. Oh then what infinite reason hast thou to be humbled: thou resistest God, as Stephen told the Jewes, *you have alwaies resisted the holy Ghost, Acts 7. 51.* so thou hast resisted Gods spirit; yea, thy wil does resist him, and that is the strongest thing to resist in the world. His word comes to convert thee, and thou dost resist his motions, his mercies, his corrections,

his

Note.

his ordinances and all holy meanes to convert thee, thou dost resist them; nay his spirit contendeth within, and thou dost resist him.

I gave you five things to consider, what it is to stick at your will nots. I beseech you consider yet farther.

First, If you will not, Gods Ministers have discharged their duties, and have left your blood on your own heads, they can go no further if you will not; the Groom can but carry the Steed unto watering as we say, if he wil not drink he cannot help it; so they can't help it, your blood lies upon your own heads, they have discharged their duties. When *Abrahams* servant objected, and how if the woman will not? *Abraham* he answers, if the woman will not be willing, *then thou shalt be clear of my oath*, *Gen. 24. 8*. So Lord, how if they will not? may we say? nay if they will not, let them chuse: thou art clear; the Lord hath sworn us to preach and teach, and exhort, and reprove; and invite you to grace; but if we do so, and you wil not, we can't help it, your blood is on your owne heads; we have discharged our oath and our duty, we would be glad that you would; but if now you will not, we have discharged our duties. Nay,

Secondly, if you will not, the Gospel hath delivered its errand, ye are guilty of your own everlasting perdition; the Gospel hath delivered its message, and this is the message. *Whosoever will, let him take of the Water of life freely*, *Revel. 22. 17*. This message hath been delivered to you often; its the last exhortation in the
whole

whole Bible: like one in the evening of the market, he is even about to take down his standing, I have told you my lowest price, if you wil have it, take; if not, chuse, I must be gone. So this is the end of Gods book: as if he should say, I am even a closing up my book, speak quickly, if ye will, come, and welcome: but if not I am gone. If yet you wil not, you wil not submit: nay but you wil have your lusts, and your stomacks wil not come down, you wil not stir a jot beyond your painted civility and formality: you wil not be more conscionable then you have been, not frequent holy duties more then you have done: nor get more holinesse then you have done, then if Wil wil have wil, Wil must win wo. Nay,

Thirdly, if you wil not: the blood of Jesus Christ hath done that it came for: it came to tender you mercy upon very easie terms; to offer you grace and pardon, and salvation and Heaven, and all upon very free cost. If you had rather that sin should be your master, then that Christ should be your master: if you wil not hearken and obey, I say the blood of Christ hath done that which it came for; and your soules shal know ye shal be worse offered; you have knowledge of the truth, Christ hath offered you very faire, and you cannot but know it, and yet you wil not submit to it; assure your selves you shal be worse offered: for next to your wil nots, comes Christ leaving you desolate. As Christ told *Ierusalem*, *I would, but you would not*: what follows? Behold *your house is left unto you desolate*, Mat. 23. 37, 38. So Christ would
and

and you would not ; he hath given you gracious offers, but you will not : therefore you may look to be worfe offered, your souls to be desolate. Nay,

Fourthly, if you will not, ye murder your own souls: when a man hath murdered himself the Coroner comes and he does sit on him, and he enquires, and he examines, and who hath murdered this man ? and when he finds that it was himself that did murder him, so he concludes, and that man is branded for murdering of himself ; so you murder your own soules. The *Jewes* their souls were all murdered ; wel, when the Coroner sate on them, he concluded they had murdered themselves : *O Israel thou hast destroyed thy self, Hos. 13. 9.* So if the Coroner sit on thee, its most certain he shall finde thou hast murdered thine own self ; O what a company of you is there, your souls are quite murdered ; one in one sin, another in another ; who hath murdered these men ? not God, he was ready to help them : not the Minister, he did use all *means* to save them ; he hath not been wanting to teach them and exhort them. No, your own selves have murdered your selves ; you would be carnal, and you would be proud, and you would not lie down to the word : when the Coroner sits on you, he must necessarily conclude, you have murdered your selves ; your owne wills have condemned you.

You remember what exhortations we gave you. As ever you regard mercy to humble yourselves, wee told you the first question
Christ

Christ askes, is, if ye be willing, as he ask'd the blind man, *what wilt thou?* Luk. 18. 41. if thou beest not willing, hee'l never take thee in hand: the subjects of the kingdom of grace must be willing. Christ will never come into a soule, where his wil may be affronted by another; Heaven cannot bear two Suns, nor one heart two wills; if thy wil be not crucified, and made agreeable to Christs, Christ cannot dwell in thy heart; there would be two contrary wills in one heart: and this cannot be: if Christ come, he will have these and these lusts turned away, which thou wouldst faine keep; he will have this done and that done, and thou wilt not: two contrary wils can never stand together. No, if thy will be contrary to Christ, Christs will, wil be contrary to thine: if thy wil be to doe that which will offend him, his Will wil be to do that which wil vex thee: *If yee will walke contrary to me, I will also walke contrary to you,* Levit. 26, 23, 24. No, no, your wills they must bow, or Christ wil not take you in hand: the will is the general presupposition of all the whole Gospel: the summe of the whole Gospel is this, to deny a mans selfe and to take up Christs Crosse and so follow him: now see the will is presupposed as ready: if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, &c. Luk. 9. 23. ne're a commandment of the Gospel, ne're a promise, ne're a one passage but presupposes the Will: Christ wil not open his mouth except thy wil be brought down.

*if subjects
of a kingdome
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partitur
duos soles.*

Note.

A few

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ning him,
for the
redeemed
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Lord.

A few words to you that are the redeemed of the Lord, and so I'll make a conclusion of all. I pray God smite home this point into your hearts; for though your wils be tamed and subdued in regard of the wicked, you do not stand out as they do, neverthelesse observe you this point: there's many a Cananite that remaines still in our bosomes, that we may thanke our own wils for not rooting out. We do not put our selves forth so much as we might, nor labour in the Lord so seriously as we might, nor walk so close as we might: oh beloved these these same will nots do us all the mischief that ever is done us. For

we never
sin. Note.

First, We never sin against gospel but onely upon will nots: indeed we sin against the law in every of our cannots, but we never sin against the Gospel, but onely in our will nots. The gospel requires nothing of a believer, but that which is given him, and therefore we never sin against the gospel, but onely in our wil nots: this is the voice of the Gospel *ἐὰν τις θέλῃ* if any man wil, *Iohn 7.17*. Oh then let us stir up our selves, shall we sin against gospel, and be angry against mercy?

Secondly, we can never displease God, but onely upon wil nots. I speak onely upon Gods people: wee can never staine our acceptance with God, but onely in our wil nots. though we cannot but sinne in our prayers, but sinne in our duties, but sinne in every thing that we do: yet this does not staine our acceptance with God, nor blemish it one whit, when God hath our wils: for if there be a willing mind, it is accepted

accepted according to that which a man hath, and not according to that which a man hath not, 2 Cor. 8. 12. But when God would have us mend this, and we wil not, and reform that, and we wil not, we let security and sloth break into our wils; here, and here only doe we displease our good God; this is a main thing to consider; is there but one thing wherein we may displease God, and shal we not take heed of that!

Thirdly, Conscience can never condemn us but only upon *wil nots*; When a child of God sins, and he cannot otherwise choose, his conscience can never condemn him. A child of Gods *cannots*, be they never so many, nay if they were millions more then they are, they never hinder sincerity; sincerity is rooted onely in the wil, it is our *wil not* that is the breach of sincerity, and therefore here onely the conscience condemns; does our conscience reproach us in our waies? let us thank our *wil nots* for this: have we little peace? it is because of the rebellion of our *wil nots*. Ah, ah, this is an infinite evil, for it hinders our comforts, it hinders our boldnesse of accessse to the Throne of grace, it hinders our patience, and every good duty, this does us infinite hurt; it stabs to the heart, and wounds our very soule, when our conscience affordeth little peace, O it hinders very grievously; all this is long of our *wil nots*, because we wil not be so careful and so circumspect as we might.

Fourthly, God can never be so angry with us but only upon *wil nots*: its true, as long as a
man

man is not in Christ, all the score stands, and God is angry for all; but God is angry for nothing but will nots in his children, as *Nehemiah* saies of Gods people in *Judah*, they would not bear, therefore God gave them up into the hand of the people of the land, *Nehem. 9.30.* God is not angry with his people for cannots, but onely for their will nots; it is our will nots that God does not so go out with our Ministers, nor so quicken his word to your hearts. It is for our will nots that he threatens our land, and begins to abridge us of our spirituall food, and shewes ominous signes of his departing away from us, and are wee not even sicke unto death for these will nots? We complaine of our deadnesse, and what trow wee is the cause, but our will nots? we complaine of our corruptions and of the leanenesse of our souls, and whom may we thanke, but our will nots? we might grow more then we do, what lets us but our will nots? What makes some of us go downe thr winde? as we say; but because we will not stand on our guards. These, these, brethren, these will nots of ours, are the reason why God is provoked against us. O let us put forth our selves, and shake of these will nots, least anger breake out, and there be no remedy; for ones crooked servant to be stubborne, it is but his kinde: but for ones childe to be stubborne, this angers the father indeed.

